THE EVOLUTION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

JOHN ELLIOTSON SYMES

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THE EVOLUTION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

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THE EVOLUTION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

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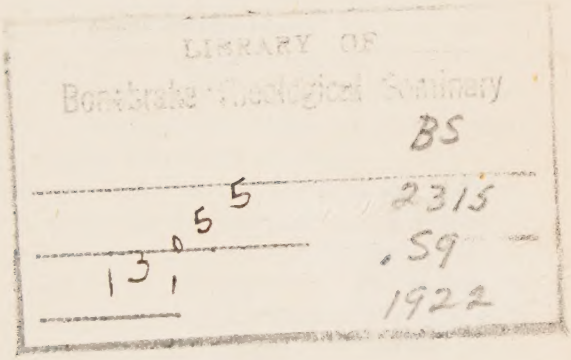
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PREFACE

THE little volume which we call the New Testament has had more influence on the world than the whole literature of England or France. It consists of twenty-seven books, written eighteen centuries ago, in a degenerate form of Greek, by authors of Jewish race and scanty learning. Nevertheless, millions of persons still turn to the New Testament for guidance and for consolation. Such persons should surely wish to know in what order and in what circumstances these twenty-seven books were written; how many of them may be assigned to their traditional authors; what motives animated these men; whether any of the books are compilations from earlier documents; and how they came to occupy their unique position among Christian writings.

Such questions will also interest, if to a less degree, those who reject Christianity, but are yet too wise to neglect or despise a literature merely because they do not share the views which it expresses. Moreover, we have here to do with a literature which has been the text-book of that religion on which modern civilization has to a great extent been built up, a religion which remains to-day one of the greatest of living forces. Many of the critics who in modern times have thrown light on the New Testament have themselves been unbelievers; but they have realized that the subject is one of profound interest and importance, and they have devoted immense learning and ability to its elucidation. Forty years ago some of these critics attributed most of the New Testament books to unknown writers of the second century, but it is now generally agreed that this attribution was based on insufficient grounds. In some cases the old

traditions as to the date and authorship of the various books have been successfully defended. In others the traditional view has been abandoned or modified, even by conservative scholars. In yet other cases it is felt that the evidence is not sufficient to justify dogmatism. But there has been at least an approach to agreement on many important points among those experts whose object is to get at facts, rather than to defend or refute some theological opinion, or to exhibit originality and ingenuity.

In my attempt to trace the evolution of the New Testament, its different books are dealt with as far as possible in their chronological order—an order which differs greatly from that of our Bible. My object has been to bring out those points concerning each book upon which modern critics have reached something like agreement; and when no such agreement has been reached to indicate the nature of the problems on which disagreement exists, the grounds for the conclusions at which I have arrived, and the degree of doubt with which such conclusions are held. I also deal very briefly with a few books like *The Shepherd of Hermas*, which, though ultimately rejected, were regarded as Scripture by many of the early churches. I then indicate the steps by which the twenty-seven came to be accepted as of paramount authority, and the general character of the problems connected with the text.

To each chapter a note is appended, with suggestions for supplementary reading, and a summary of the views of the chief modern critics on the more important of the points still under dispute. Finally, there is a bibliography of works published in English since 1890, which throw light upon the evolution of the New Testament.

The books, concerning which my conclusions differ from those of the majority of the critics, are: the *Epistle of St. James*, the *Second Epistle of St. Peter*, the *Epistle to the Philippians*, and the *Apocalypse*. I am also in a minority on points connected with the *Epistles of St. John*, and perhaps the *Epistle to the*

Ephesians; but in these cases I am confident that the minority will soon be turned into a majority.

I use the phrase 'higher criticism' in the sense which is generally accepted, but I do so under protest. The highest criticism is 'the adventure of a soul among masterpieces.' This is technically included under 'lower' criticism, and the word 'higher' is limited to attempts to get behind the masterpieces, to their sources, dates, authors, and editors. This is a useful and even necessary work, but it is only in a technical sense that I can admit it to be 'higher' than insight into the significance of the masterpieces as they are.

J. E. SYMES.

Mr. Symes died a few months before the publication of this book. With the aid of friends more learned than I am in matters theological, I have done my best to carry out the revision of the proofs and the completion of the Bibliography in such manner as my husband would have approved.

E. S. SYMES.

October, 1921.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

I.C.C.	=	International Critical Commentaries.
W.C.	=	Westminster Commentaries.
C.G.T.	=	Cambridge Greek Testament.
C.R.V.	=	Cambridge Revised Version.
W.N.T.	=	Westminster New Testament.
C.B.	=	Century Bible.
Ex.G.T.	=	Expositor's Greek Testament.
I.H.	=	International Handbooks to the New Testament.

BOOKS OF REFERENCE

H.D.B.	= Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible; 8 vols. 1898-1904.
H.D.C.G.	= Hastings' Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels; 2 vols. 1906-1908.
H.D.A.C.	= Hastings' Dictionary of the Apostolic Church; 2 vols. 1915-1918.
H.Enc.R.E.	= Hastings' Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics; vols. A—SUD. 1908-1920.
Enc.Bib.	= Encyclopædia Biblica; 4 vols. 1899-1903.
Enc.Brit.	= Encyclopædia Britannica; Eleventh Edition. 1911.

The titles of Bible Books are abbreviated—*e.g.*, *Mark* = 'The Gospel according to St. Mark.'

THE EVOLUTION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

CHAPTER I

BEFORE THE NEW TESTAMENT

(A.D. 29-51)

THE date of the Crucifixion, and therefore of the foundation of the Christian Church, is generally given by modern authorities as A.D. 29. It was not until twenty-two years later that the earliest of our New Testament books was written. Some effort is necessary in order to realize that the Church could exist for even twenty-two years without any Gospels or any Epistles; and that even when these books had been written and were widely read, they did not rank as Scripture. It was only very gradually, and in the course of several centuries, that they were brought together to form an authoritative group of sacred writings.

In primitive times there was no New Testament, just as there were no churches in which Christians could assemble for common worship. The early Believers gathered together in private houses, and, when they could obtain permission, preached in Jewish synagogues. They had, of course, their two great Sacraments: Baptism, whereby men and women and probably children were admitted into the Church; and the Eucharist, in which they broke Bread and drank Wine in obedience to their Master's Institution, in token that His Body was broken and His Blood shed for the benefit of mankind. What further meaning they attached to the Elements we have no positive evidence to show. They

believed in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and they formed a sort of family, whose mutual affection found expression in mutual beneficence. At first they even tried the system of having all things in common, and distributing to the brethren according to their needs; but this communistic experiment had very soon to be abandoned. Dishonest people tried to secure a share without surrendering their private possessions, and even apart from such dishonesty, disputes naturally arose as to the fashion in which the distribution should be made. Nevertheless, the central idea of the Church continued to be Mutual Love. Christians must bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the Law of Him in Whose Life and Death the principle of self-sacrifice had been for ever sanctified. They had, moreover, a common hope that their Master would return—somewhat in the fashion made familiar to them in those Jewish Apocalypses which had been poured out in the previous two centuries. They had also a common ideal—to be perfect, even as their Father in Heaven was perfect.

We must next notice that the earliest Christians were Jews, not merely by race, but also in religion. They were circumcised; they kept the Law of Moses; and when they were within reach of Jerusalem they attended the Temple services. The early Christians were, in short, a sect or guild of Jews who had added to Judaism certain new elements, especially the belief that Jesus was the promised Messiah; that He had risen from the dead; and that He would shortly return to judge the world. From its very beginning the new sect suffered some persecution, but at first only the Jewish Sadducees were violently hostile. It was a fundamental principle of Roman Government to meddle as little as possible with local religions, except where interference was found necessary for the maintenance of order or for the suppression of movements that might otherwise culminate in rebellion. This policy was manifest in the action of Pontius Pilate. It was mainly in the interests of law and order that he consented to the Crucifixion, demanded by

the authorities of a religion in which he did not believe. As for the Jews—their attitude towards the infant Church was a varying one. They did not object to Christian sacraments or philanthropic activities. They did not object to the Church as a guild of Jews who held certain peculiar ideas. On two important points, indeed, the majority of Jews were in actual agreement with the guild. They believed in a Future Life and in a Day of Judgment. They believed also in the speedy coming of Messiah. They did undoubtedly object to the identification of Messiah with Jesus of Nazareth, but this only actively provoked them when it was accompanied by any threat of abrogating the Law of Moses. And of such abrogation the earliest Christians had no idea. By conviction they were ardent Jews, and as a matter of prudence as well as of principle, their attitude was conciliatory. But while the mass of the Jews were not violently hostile to Christianity, an exception must be made of the Sadducees, who, as they rejected a future life, were naturally antipathetic to the belief in a general resurrection, or in that particular Resurrection to which Christians attached so much importance. The Sadducees, though few in number, occupied high positions. They were the aristocratic party, contemptuous of their poorer and less educated co-religionists, among whom they classed the new sect.

The first serious outbreak against the Believers was provoked by Stephen. His declaration that the Temple Worship and the Mosaic Law had only a temporary value, and that they must be amended and indeed superseded by the new Society, naturally aroused a storm. When placed upon his trial, Stephen, far from adopting a conciliatory attitude, maintained that God's Revelation is *progressive*, thus striking a blow at the cardinal Jewish conviction that the Hebrew Law and Worship had been given them by Jehovah once and for always. Stephen fiercely upbraided the Jews for their bigotry and narrowness, a provocative action which, however desirable or necessary, naturally resulted in the

death of the offender. It was a defiance not only of the Sadducees, but also of all orthodox Jews; and as the Apostles did not repudiate Stephen's teaching, a general persecution followed, with the result that the Christians were driven from Jerusalem and scattered abroad through Judæa and Samaria (A.D. 35).

Persecution often defeats its own objects, and so it did in this case. The chief results of the death of Stephen and the expulsion of the Christians were, firstly, that the new teaching hitherto confined to Jerusalem was carried throughout Palestine, and secondly that the purely Judaic character of Christianity began to be questioned. The fugitive Christians naturally made their first appeal to Jews, but when they were driven out of Jerusalem they came in contact with a mixture of races and religions that brought vividly home to them problems which, in the Holy City, had possessed comparatively little urgency. This was especially the case in Samaria, for the Samaritans were partly, at least, of Jewish descent, although completely cut off from Judaism. The man who first faced this difficulty was Philip. The fact that the Samaritans, like the Jews, looked forward to the appearance of a Messiah may have determined his bold action in appealing to these outsiders. There is no reason to suppose that his course was prompted or even sanctioned by the Apostles. Probably, like Stephen before him, Philip acted on his own initiative; but when the news of his action reached the Apostles they sent their two leaders Peter and John to investigate such startling proceedings on the spot. These Apostles satisfied themselves that God was working through Philip, and where His Spirit led the Church must follow. They therefore laid their hands upon the converted Samaritans, and these received the Holy Ghost.

How deeply Peter was impressed by this incident may be seen from the fact that, having hitherto been the leader of the Church in Jerusalem, he now appears to have resigned this high position to James, in order that he might devote himself wholly to work in other places

beyond the city. This James was apparently not an Apostle—neither James the Greater nor James the Less, but James the 'brother of the Lord,' afterwards known as the first Bishop of Jerusalem. Of Peter we are told that 'he went through all parts.' From Paul's Epistles we learn that he travelled as far afield as Antioch and Corinth, but beyond such meagre references we know little of his evangelistic work. A still greater missionary was now entering the field, and the author of the *Acts of the Apostles* soon concentrates his attention on Paul.

The rapid growth of the Church may here be illustrated by a few figures. The first recorded number of the brethren is about one hundred and twenty (*Acts* i. 15). After Pentecost there are about three thousand baptized. A little later there were about five thousand men, apparently excluding women and children. But now that the work was spreading far and wide beyond Jerusalem, the author of the *Acts* ceases to make numerical estimates, and presumably neither the Apostles nor anyone else could do more than guess at the numbers. Nevertheless, we must suppose that the converts were still either Jews or Samaritans, and that the latter were accepted not because they were human beings, but because they were akin to Jews by blood, and by some at least of their religious doctrines, ceremonies, and hopes.

The admission of Cornelius is the next great landmark in the history of the early Church; the first practical assertion that the new religion was to be world-wide. Peter himself needed to be converted to this point of view. He had a Vision in which he was invited to violate the Mosaic Law by eating forbidden food, and when he naturally protested against the idea, he heard in his Dream a Voice which forbade him to call any God-created thing unclean. It might have been thought that this Vision was intended to abolish the Mosaic regulations as to meats, but Peter saw that it had a deeper and wider significance, and that he was really forbidden to regard any *human* creature as common or

unclean. He therefore continued to observe the Mosaic regulations about food, but he recognized henceforth that Christianity could no longer be confined to Jews and Samaritans. Peter's acceptance of Cornelius, which seems to us so obvious a matter, was a tremendous step towards the freedom and universality of the Gospel. It is at least possible that Cornelius and the early Gentile converts were expected to conform to Judaism as soon as they became Christians. No doubt the story is, on this point, rather obscure. The alternative seems to be that Peter soon fell away from the truth which had been taught him in the Vision, for it seems clear that he opposed, or at least hesitated to support, the bolder and more consistent policy which Paul was soon advocating—the policy of putting Gentile converts on a level with Jews, on the ground that in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availed anything nor uncircumcision.

The Apostles seem to have been greatly perplexed by Paul's attitude, but their hesitancy may have been partly due to a fear of alienating their own Jewish congregations. The leaders of the Christian Church have often taken a more liberal view than the majority of their followers, but from consideration for the prejudices of weaker brethren have refrained from acting up to their convictions. They have left it to men like Stephen and Philip to take the initiative, and they have then come to find themselves in a very difficult position. In the case of a single individual like Cornelius there was room for compromise. He might have been regarded as a man of such exceptional piety as to deserve exceptional treatment. But very soon it became a question of the treatment of whole classes of would-be converts, and many of these were Greeks with the active rationalistic minds of their race; men who would insist on applying logical tests to any compromise, and were not likely to submit to Mosaic restrictions. Moreover, the Church was now spreading far beyond the region wherein Jewish authority was recognized by the Roman Government.

Matters came to a head at Antioch, in Syria, where a

Church grew up composed mainly of Greeks, and where Judaism was not recognized by the authorities as the local religion. There seemed to be a real danger that Antioch would dissociate itself from Jerusalem, and thus create a precedent for a policy fatal to the Unity of the Christian Church. The difficulty was temporarily surmounted in a characteristic fashion. The Church at Jerusalem was normally poor. In the year A.D. 45 there was an exceptional drought, and the Christians of Antioch resolved to send money for the relief of the Mother Church at Jerusalem. This seems a small matter, yet if bearing one another's burdens was really fulfilling the Law of Christ, it was a practical assertion of Unity. It had the additional advantage of increasing the intercourse between the two bodies, the interchange of ideas, the removal of prejudices based on ignorance, the increase of knowledge, the growth of intimacy and mutual hospitality. This happy precedent was soon followed. Twelve years later we find the Churches of Galatia, Asia, Macedonia, and Achaia, carrying out the same idea.

Paul and Barnabas were among those appointed to bear alms from Antioch to Jerusalem, and they took the opportunity of discussing with the Apostles there, the vexed question whether Greek converts should be required to conform to the Law. Paul gives some account of the matter in the second chapter of his *Epistle to the Galatians*. We gather from this that the discussions were private, and that the Apostles were quite satisfied with the explanations they received. They extended the right hand of fellowship to Paul and Barnabas, recognizing them as fellow-workers, and in no way objecting to their liberal policy towards Gentiles. When Peter visited Antioch he seems to have wavered, but Paul withstood him to his face, apparently on the ground that it was from fear of the Jewish Christians that he would not fall in with the Pauline policy or eat with Gentiles.

This incident is a striking evidence of how difficult it

was to convince a man like Peter that people who were not Jews could yet be very good Christians. Peter was no doubt partly actuated by a desire not to offend his own section of the Church, though we can hardly suppose that he would have taken such a line if he had really grasped the great principles involved in the Vision that had led him to accept Cornelius. But the whole tendency of the age was with Paul. A Judaic Christianity would be practically limited to a few thousand disciples, whereas a Hellenistic Christianity could appeal to the whole world. The results of Paul's policy were soon apparent. Antioch became a Mother Church, sending out missions and founding other churches, while Jerusalem passed more and more into the background, and Judaic Christianity gradually died out. We may here notice that it was at Antioch, in the early forties, that the disciples were first called Christians.

This Antioch was a city of Syria, but we must now follow Paul to another Antioch, known as Antioch in Pisidia. From a speech that he delivered there we gather that as yet the great Apostle to the Gentiles still regarded himself as primarily concerned with the Jews. When he reached Pisidian Antioch it was to Jews that he first addressed himself, accepting an invitation from the rulers of the synagogue to speak to their congregation. This congregation would consist of three classes—Jews, Proselytes, and God-fearers. 'God-fearers' were Gentiles who had been attracted to Judaism by its doctrine of the one God, and by its insistence on a high ethical standard, but who had not gone so far as to become proselytes.

Paul began by addressing the congregation as two separate groups (*Acts* xiii. 16): 'Men of Israel'—whether Jews or Proselytes—'and ye that fear God,' *i.e.*, ye that, though not included in Israel, are yet drawn towards Israel's God; but he soon identifies himself with the former, and briefly sketches their history from the time of their deliverance from Egypt till the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus. 'Through this man,' he

proceeds, 'is proclaimed unto you remission of sins: And by him, everyone that believeth is justified from all things' (*Acts* xiii. 38, R.V.).

Thus to a congregation of Jews, Proselytes, and God-fearers Paul definitely proclaims a Universal Gospel. 'Everyone that believeth' is to be made righteous by Christ. No conditions are attached. There is no hint even that they must become converts to Judaism.

This proclamation evidently startled the audience, but it neither converted them *en masse* nor provoked them to summary rejection of the new doctrine. It merely led to an invitation to Paul to speak again on the following Sabbath. Evidently the Jews of Antioch in Pisidia were more open-minded than those of Palestine or even of Syria (*cf. Gal.* iv. 15). We are told that 'almost the whole city' flocked to hear the second speech. Now at length the Jews took alarm. The concourse of outsiders probably brought home to them the full significance of the new doctrine, or at least the fact that it was actually putting Jew and Gentile upon the same level, for we are told that 'when the Jews saw the multitude they were filled with jealousy' and began to resist. Then Paul and Barnabas boldly told them 'it was necessary that the Word of God should be first spoken to you, but seeing ye put it from you . . . we turn to the Gentiles.' A critical moment had come. In one city, at any rate, the great Missionary was to concentrate his energies upon the Gentiles. He was to leave the Jews to Peter and James, while he turned to the greater task of converting the Pagan world; a world dominated by Roman arms but permeated by Oriental mysticism and Greek philosophy.

This brings us to A.D. 46. The Jews had sufficient influence to secure the expulsion of Paul from Antioch, but it seems to have taken them some months to secure their object, and in the interval a flourishing Christian Church was established in that city. It was filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost. Paul, writing long afterwards, describes the fervour which characterized the

Galatian Churches in the beginning, and of these Galatian Churches Pisidian Antioch was the first.

In the spring of A.D. 47 Paul and Barnabas were expelled from Antioch, but we are not told the exact ground of their expulsion. Certain ladies—wives, apparently, of leading citizens—were somehow influenced by the Jews. The ladies doubtless brought pressure to bear upon their husbands, some of whom were presumably Roman officials. The charge brought against them can hardly have been their Christianity, as the Christian Church was allowed to continue both in the city and in the regions round. The Roman Government had always a hard task to preserve the peace in its colonies and provinces. Its general policy was to acquiesce in isolated acts of injustice, if by so doing riots and popular discontents could be avoided. To expel the leaders of the new movement, without attempting to suppress the movement itself, may have seemed to them a reasonable compromise. To strike at individuals rather than at classes is a favourite policy of despotism, and has often a low sort of wisdom about it. At any rate, Paul and Barnabas were driven from Antioch, and they decided to cross the mountainous region which separated that city from Iconium.

Their experiences here were very similar. Once more they began by preaching in the synagogue. Once more there were many converts, both Jew and Gentile. Once more the unconverted Jews stirred up an opposition; but this time they appealed to the mob rather than to the leading citizens. Paul and Barnabas were warned of a plot 'to entreat them shamefully and to stone them.' They decided to depart to the neighbouring Lycaonia with its two great cities of Lystra and Derbe. These cities, like Antioch and Iconium, were included in the Roman province of Galatia. Their population consisted of a few Romans forming the local aristocracy, a few Greeks and Jews, and a number of Asiatic natives. The great mass of the inhabitants of the towns of Asia were neither Roman, Greek, nor Jew. They were compara-

tively barbarous subjects of Rome, whose language was either a form of Greek or some dialect of their own. Of this class we have as yet heard little in the *Acts*. But at Lystra they come to the front, convinced by the cure of a lame man, that their visitors were Jupiter and Mercury—gods of whose existence they had learned from their Roman conquerors. Sacrifices in honour of Paul and Barnabas were hastily prepared, but Paul explained that their object was to turn men from such deities as Jupiter and Mercury to the worship of the one true God, Who had already been sending them His good gifts of sunshine, rain, and harvest. The simple people were moved, but only for the moment. Hostile Jews arrived in haste from Antioch and Iconium, and persuaded their hearers to stone Paul. They dragged his body out of the city, 'supposing that he was dead. But as the disciples stood round him he rose up and entered into the city: and on the morrow he went forth with Barnabas to Derbe.' Thence they decided to retrace their steps in order to visit the churches they had already founded. It was a dangerous journey, but love of their converts constrained them, and neither the Roman officials nor the populace seem to have harassed them. The previous expulsions and persecutions were perhaps due to temporary causes. At any rate, the Christian missionaries were allowed to return to the Syrian Antioch without molestation. In the course of the journey they arranged for the election by the Galatian congregations of 'presbyters,' who were apparently a sort of clergy appointed to teach, organize, and administer the Sacraments. They were probably chosen by the vote of the whole congregation, and confirmed in their office by the laying on of the Apostles' hands. We have no earlier evidence of the existence of any class of officials in the churches outside Jerusalem.

Paul returned to Syrian Antioch probably at the end of A.D. 48 or early in A.D. 49. It was then that Peter made his famous visit thither, when he began by living familiarly and even eating with Gentiles. But certain

men came down 'from James,' sent, that is to say, by the head of the Church in Jerusalem, and told Peter plainly that if Gentiles wished to enter the Church they must do so by way of Judaism. Peter was probably still wavering between the two opinions. His vacillation drew down upon him a rebuke from Paul, and it was ultimately decided to submit the question to the Apostolic Church in Jerusalem.

This brings us to the first important Council of the Church (A.D. 49). James presided at its deliberations. Paul and Barnabas represented the Gentile point of view. On the other side the lead was taken by certain Pharisees who had accepted the Faith, but maintained that every Christian must conform to the whole Mosaic system. After much discussion Peter made a weighty speech, reminding his audience how they had first been led to preach to the Gentiles, 'and God which knoweth the heart, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as He did unto us. . . . Now therefore why tempt ye God to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?' Every humble and pious Jew knew in his heart that he had not really obeyed the whole Mosaic Law. Peter's speech was followed by a silence which secured for Paul and Barnabas a fair hearing. Their earlier remarks had apparently been shouted down. Then James followed up Peter's argument with a definite proposal, which, in the form in which it has come down to us, was of the nature of a compromise. Let the Gentiles abstain from idolatry, 'blood,' fornication, and from the eating of things strangled; but let no further demands be laid upon them. This proposal was approved by the Council and embodied in a formal decree.

There are difficulties in the way of our accepting this record as correct. It is inconceivable that James and the Council should have put the eating of things strangled on a level with fornication. Moreover, there is not the slightest evidence that, in this form, the decree was obeyed by Gentile Christians, for however

short a period. Nor do the Epistles ever refer to it. If, however, we regard the prohibition of things strangled as a later Judaic interpolation, the whole difficulty vanishes, for the other three prohibitions may be regarded as purely ethical. Cruelty, Impurity, and Superstition were the three great blots on Paganism. They formed, in fact, a part of many heathen religions, as, for instance, the worship of Moloch and Belial. Yet no one could rightly be baptized while stained with any of the three sins. The decree of the Council would in this case be, in effect, to affirm the Moral Law of the Old Testament, but to decline to enforce *any* of its ceremonial rules. This is so plainly accordant with the spirit of Christianity that it appears most reasonable to regard the 'things strangled' as an interpolation, in which case 'blood' would naturally mean bloodshed, and 'pollutions of idols' (*Acts* xv. 20) would mean idolatry. On this supposition the decision of the first great Christian Council would stand out as a landmark of Christian Law and Christian Liberty. Its significance becomes even greater when we remember that the decree was made, not by a General Council, but by that Jerusalem Church which would be least likely to depreciate the ceremonial Law of Moses. There is no reason to suppose that the Galatian delegates were allowed to vote at the Council. The voters were the Apostles and Elders of Jerusalem. They boldly claimed that their decisions were prompted by One higher than themselves: 'It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us.'

It is interesting to notice that this momentous decision immediately preceded the passing of Christianity into Europe. Paul returned to Antioch, and then once more visited his beloved Galatian Churches, as well as others which he had founded in Northern Syria and Cilicia. In the course of this journey he circumcised Timothy, 'because of the Jews,' thus giving proof of a conciliatory disposition which we might not have expected. It must be remembered that Paul himself was still a Jew, and strongly as he objected to any insistence on circum-

cision, he had apparently no abstract objection to the rite. Timothy was the son of a Greek father and a Christian Jewess, who may have been a member of the circle for whose satisfaction the circumcision was performed.

Paul next proposed to push on into 'Asia,' the Roman province of which Ephesus was the capital; but 'the Spirit' forbade this plan, as also a proposed journey into Bithynia. These mysterious prohibitions are not explained; and as a matter of fact Paul did go westward into 'Asia' as far as Troas. There he had the Vision of a man of Macedonia praying for help. This he regarded as an invitation to visit Europe, and he accepted it. Thus at length the Gospel entered that continent where it was to establish itself so conspicuously. The prohibitions which led up to this momentous step were justified by the inauguration of a movement, compared with which any preaching in 'Asia' or Bithynia would have been indeed insignificant.

The author of the *Acts of the Apostles* probably joined Paul in this eventful journey, for at this point he begins to use the pronouns 'we' and 'us.' Where we find these pronouns employed (chapters xvi. to xxviii.) we naturally assume that he is writing as an eye-witness, while elsewhere he has to rely on the evidence of others. The party started by sea from Troas, and pushed on to Philippi in Macedonia. There began the conversion of Europe. The missionaries first addressed a group of women, one of whom, called Lydia, probably after her native place, appears to have been at once converted. She and her whole household were baptized, and 'she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there. And she constrained us.' Lydia was a seller of purple, presumably of purple garments. Her eagerness to entertain a party of at least four, and their willingness to be so entertained, suggests that she was a rich woman, at any rate as compared with most of the converts. Her 'household' would consist of slaves. She is not likely

to have put pressure upon them to be baptized, but they were presumably attached to her and ready to be influenced and to worship as she worshipped.

The house of Lydia became the headquarters of the new Church. But Paul's work at Philippi was soon interrupted. A maiden 'with a spirit of divination' acclaimed the missionaries as 'servants of the most high God, which proclaim unto you the way of salvation.' Paul pitied this girl, and liberated her from the spirit that possessed her, thus inflicting serious loss upon her employers, who made great gain from her divinations. They complained to the magistrates and roused a mob, with the result that Paul and his colleague Silas were thrown into prison. This obscure incident reminds us of the prevalence of magic in those early times. The girl was presumably a sensible person who had been got hold of by unscrupulous people, and trained to trade on popular superstitions. Her references to God and to salvation must not be taken as implying any ideas specifically Christian. She was merely using terms familiar to the paganism of an age which was growing sceptical of the old mythologies, and hungering to be saved by some form of magic from the various ills of which it was conscious. The story of Simon (*Acts* viii. 9-24) shows us the kind of people who offered to provide such salvation. Simon taught a sort of philosophic religion. He represented himself as an emanation from God, and amazed people by his sorceries. He regarded the Christian missionaries as rival magicians, and sought to purchase some of their powers from them. Such men are not very uncommon, especially at certain periods of the world's history. They are partly impostors, partly self-deluded; and they usually possess abnormal powers as hypnotists and the like, which they carefully train and develop. They are often conjurors and ventriloquists. They practise such arts as clairvoyance, palmistry, and astrology; and they clothe their ideas in metaphysical and theosophical language. The prevalence of such men in the Apostolic age, was connected with the

widespread scepticism, combined with a craving for cryptic knowledge and mysticism. At some points they taught doctrines akin to those of Christianity and of various mystical oriental religions; but they utilized hysteria and superstition, and were naturally distrusted by those whose religion was largely ethical. Of these was Paul. As he looked upon the poor girl who proclaimed his Divine mission, he was 'sore troubled.' He attributed her words to spiritual possession, and bade the evil spirit depart from her. This incident throws interesting light upon his attitude towards magic and perhaps towards hysteria, and it resulted, as we have seen, in his being cast with Silas into jail. There followed an earthquake which shook open the prison doors, but Paul and Silas made no attempt to escape, and the grateful jailer was so much impressed by their conduct that he lent a ready ear to the Gospel message, and was converted with his whole household. Paul and Silas were Roman citizens, and their rights as such had been violated by the magistrates of Philippi; but they consented to leave the city quietly, leaving Luke and Lydia to build up the first European Church.

From Philippi Paul pushed on to Thessalonica, now Salonica, which was the chief city in Macedonia. Here the old controversy soon reappeared. Though he had turned to the Gentiles, Paul was too much of a Jew to neglect the Israelites. Moreover, the local synagogue gave him everywhere a good opening. To Jews he could begin his teaching with the Old Testament Scriptures, and unfold the argument from Prophecy. But he could not, even when addressing Jews, be silent for long about his conviction of the absolutely equal rights of Gentiles under the new Dispensation. To most Jews this view was unendurable. Some of them thought they could have the preachers of so obnoxious a doctrine suppressed by accusing them of treason against Rome, alleging that the Christians regarded Jesus as the rightful emperor. This was an ingenious proceeding, for the Romans, though in most respects anxious to maintain

toleration, could not acquiesce in treasonable movements. The Christians appear to have become alarmed. They sent Paul and Silas out of the city, and soon afterwards the Apostle wrote to the Thessalonians that Satan prevented him from visiting them (*I. Thes.* ii. 18). He probably felt that if he came back the attack on the Thessalonian Christians would be renewed. From the same Epistle we gather that Paul was much distressed at his enforced absence. He seems to have felt that the congregation needed his continued presence to keep them from falling away from sound doctrine. To this feeling we may attribute the very beginning of the New Testament. The *First Epistle to the Thessalonians* was probably the earliest of our New Testament books. It contains no hint that its author intended or expected it to come to be regarded as Scripture. He does not claim any special inspiration. He writes as if he was concerned only with the local circumstances of this single Church. But what Paul had to say to the Thessalonians has been found to be both inspiring and inspired, and to deserve the careful study of all the later generations of the Church Universal.

NOTE ON CHAPTER I

We have little material outside the New Testament for the History of the Christian Church between A.D. 30 and A.D. 50. Our chief authority is *Acts*, but many passages in the book are difficult to interpret, and the historicity of others is disputed. Some preliminary information may be derived from Epistles, especially from those written between A.D. 50 and A.D. 70.

The first five chapters of Duchesne's *Early History of the Christian Church* (English translation, 1909-12) forms a good introduction to the subject. Hausrath's *History of the New Testament Times* (English translation by L. Huxley, 1895); Weizsäcker's *The Apostolic Age of the Christian Church* (1895); Ropes' *The Apostolic Age in the Light of Modern*

Criticism (1906) are also recommended. For the controversy as to whether the decree of the Jerusalem Church was ethical or ceremonial, see Kirsopp Lake's *The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul* (1911), and Wilson's *Origin and Aims of Acts* (1912).

Despite the labours of scholars and historians, the whole subject of the earliest history of the Church remains very obscure. The people nicknamed 'Irvingites' built up their organization on very plausible interpretations of New Testament texts; but most critics would reject the idea that the Early Church had any such organization. Hatch's *Organization of the Early Christian Churches* (1881); Hort's *Christian Ecclesia* (1897) and McGiffert's article on *Church History* in Enc. Brit. are valuable.

For the Chronology of the New Testament, see the article on this subject in H.D.B.

Ramsay's *First Christian Century* (1911) is an interesting attack on Moffatt's excellent *Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament* (third edition, 1918), and incidentally on much of the 'Higher Criticism.' The great value of the last-named book seems to me, however, to be quite indisputable.

CHAPTER II

THE NEW TESTAMENT BEGINS

First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians (A.D. 51).

Integrity and Authorship of Latter in Dispute

Just before Paul wrote the first of his Epistles, he paid his famous visit to Athens, still the headquarters of Literature, Philosophy, and Art, the seat of the highest education known to the Old World. He walked about her streets, surveyed the Parthenon and other marvels, conversed with some of those nimble thinkers who maintained Athens upon her intellectual pinnacle. But what interested him most were the images of the gods, the statues wrought with a skill that no other race has ever equalled, the altars raised in honour of this deity or that, and, above all, one which bore the inscription 'To an Unknown God.' He argued in the market-place with Stoics and Epicureans, provoking the ridicule of some and the curiosity of others. Men asked, 'What would this babbler say?' and again, 'He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods'; and they took him and brought him into the Areopagus, and there, under the shadow of the most beautiful building in the world, they challenged him to set forth his doctrine.

Paul met this challenge with a brilliant speech, the beauty of which is, however, somewhat marred in our translation. He took that altar 'to an Unknown God' as an evidence of a religious spirit not satisfied with existing mythologies, and declared that he had come to reveal the God Whom, without knowing His true Nature, they already worshipped. This God 'dwelleth

not in temples made with hands'—and here we can imagine the orator pointing to the Parthenon—'neither is he served by men's hands'—as on the innumerable altars around. He has created men in order 'that they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us: For in him we live and move and have our being.' Then, in the same way as he had utilized for his argument the sublime monuments of Greek sculpture, he turns to Greek literature, and reminds his hearers that one of their own poets had described men as the children of God. God cannot therefore resemble any of the statues of Phidias or Praxiteles or be 'like unto gold or silver or stone graven by art and device of man.' He calls on us to repent, and He will judge the world by the standard of Him whom He has raised from the dead. Paul had led up to his climax with exquisite tact, but few among his hearers were convinced. Epicureanism definitely declared that the gods are not interested in human affairs. Stoicism regarded religion as something of which most men were incapable, as something which could only be attained by an arduous philosophical training and rigorous ethical discipline. Both these dominant schools of philosophy had points of contact with Christianity, but both were repelled by its simplicity, its universalism, and its direct appeal to the normal human heart.

The Apostle was disappointed by the comparative failure of his appeal to the Athenians, and when he passed on to Corinth, the other great centre of Greek intellectual energy, his experiences there must have confirmed his distrust of philosophic appeals. At any rate, he writes at a later time to the Corinthians that he determined not to know anything among them 'save Jesus Christ and Him crucified.' The centre of Paul's theology had for a time shifted from the Resurrection to the Crucifixion, just as it subsequently shifted to the Incarnation.

Corinth was now the commercial capital of Greece.

The bulk of the trade between Rome and the East passed through this great city, for the sea route was so dangerous that most travellers preferred to cross the isthmus on which Corinth stood. If Christianity was to spread over the civilized world Corinth might well become its next headquarters, and in the days of Paul the city was the natural centre of eastern Mediterranean commerce, especially that between Rome and Asia Minor. Thither, then, came Paul, and as usual he began his missionary operations by preaching in the synagogue. The customary opposition followed, and the Apostle turned once more to the Gentiles, many of whom believed and were baptized. The Roman governor of Corinth was, at this time, Gallio, a brother of the famous Seneca, and when some Jews prosecuted Paul before him Gallio absolutely declined to listen. He laid it down that the Christians were at perfect liberty to preach their doctrines, provided that they did not violate Roman laws. This important decision was probably made in A.D. 51.

To us Paul's stay in Corinth is chiefly interesting from the fact that he now wrote that *First Epistle to the Thessalonians,* which is the earliest of his surviving letters and the earliest of all the New Testament books. In a sense we are indebted for this Epistle to 'Satan' (*I. Thes.* ii. 18). We have seen that Paul had left Thessalonica full of misgivings as to the stability of the little congregation he had gathered there, and that when he meant to revisit the city 'Satan' hindered him. By Satan he seems to have meant that Evil Power which had placed him in this dilemma: that either he must absent himself from his beloved Church which sorely needed his presence, or else he must run the risk of provoking a renewal of a persecution which might well crush out the newly born Christianity of the Thessalonians. For the moment Satan had been victorious in a corner of the battlefield. Paul set himself, however, to make the best of the situation. He organized the little church from a distance, and sent Timothy to supervise

the work. This involved, among other things, the appointment of presbyters such as Paul had personally ordained in the Galatian cities (*Acts* xiv. and *I. Thes.* v.). He himself wrote to the converts whom he might not visit, the Epistle which we have now to summarize.

CHAPTER I. begins in the name, not only of Paul, but also of Timothy and Silas. The latter had apparently assisted Timothy in his previous mission. The three men begin by expressing their thankfulness to God for the success of their labours, a success which was so great that the Thessalonians had become an example to all the Christians of Macedonia and Achaia. Even beyond these limits: 'in every place your faith to Godward is spread abroad.' This Church of Thessalonica consisted chiefly of converts from Paganism. They 'turned from idols'—not from Judaism—'to serve a living and true God; and to wait for His Son.'

CHAPTER II.—Paul reminds the Thessalonians of his labours on their behalf. He had imparted to them not only the Gospel, but, as it were, his very soul. He had worked day and night, living virtuously, dealing with them as a father with his children; and they had received his teaching as from God. They had been persecuted by their own countrymen, as he also had been persecuted by his countrymen the Jews; and it was Satan himself who had prevented him from visiting his converts, in whom he so greatly gloried.

CHAPTER III.—He had been content to be left alone in Athens, and to send his brother Timothy to build up their Church. Timothy has now returned and 'brought us glad tidings of your faith and love.' Paul therefore rejoices and prays that he may soon be able to visit them. Meanwhile he urges them to persevere.

CHAPTER IV. lays special stress on Purity. There is no need to press upon the converts the duty of brotherly love. This, of course, every Christian must recognize in theory, even if in practice he does not entirely achieve it. Next to Impurity the chief spiritual danger of the Thessalonians is neglect of the duties of quietness—of

minding, each man, his own business; of working with his own hands; and of acting 'honestly towards them that are without.' We gather that these new converts were apt to be carried away by spiritual excitement and to neglect some of the humbler duties of life, including their obligations to unbelieving outsiders. Paul passes next to eschatological questions. The early disciples expected the speedy return of Jesus, and one of their great hopes was that they might be alive at the Lord's Coming. Paul shared this hope; but he insists that those who are alive at the Second Advent will have no precedence over those that have died (*I. Thes.* iv. 15; *for* 'prevent' *in A.V. read* 'precede,' *as in R.V.*). The Apostle then tries to paint the great scene of Christ's Coming, using the imagery of Jewish and Christian Apocalyptic literature. 'For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we that are alive that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air.' It seems probable that Paul still believed in the literal accuracy of such Apocalyptic visions, but his interest is chiefly in their ethical consequences.

CHAPTER V. reminds the Thessalonians that no man knows when these things will come to pass. The vital thing is that they should watch and be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. The next subject dealt with concerns the newly appointed officials. This was a somewhat delicate and a most important matter. The Church in Jerusalem had a comparatively efficient organization. It was the seat of the original Apostles. It had appointed seven Deacons, and had to some extent defined their functions. It possessed in James an official Head, afterwards to be called a Bishop. The Gentile Churches, on the other hand, had little or no organization. Paul, Timothy, and Silas were not officials of any special church. They were rather missionaries, with a general

authority over scattered congregations. The need for some local organization was urgent, and Paul had made a beginning by ordaining presbyters. He was now anxious to secure for these a reasonable authority and precedence, without weakening the sense of responsibility and the duty of initiative in individual Christians. 'The presbyters,' we are told, 'labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you. . . . Esteem them very highly for their work's sake.' The duties of the presbyters are here defined as three—to labour, to govern, and to teach. The congregation must think of them as fellow-workers, but also as rulers. Presbyters are to be honoured for their labours, not merely for their official position. The words 'Be at peace among yourselves' suggest the danger of dissensions, and perhaps of insubordination. The congregation is to obey the presbyters, but not to lay their own responsibility upon official shoulders. 'We exhort you, brethren, admonish the disorderly, encourage the faint-hearted, support the weak, be long-suffering toward all.' Reading between the lines, we see Paul's meaning expressed with so much tact and moderation that neither presbyters nor those under them could be offended. On the one hand, the Church needs wise government, judicious administration, good preaching. Let proper persons be appointed to do these things, and let them be loyally supported. But let every Christian remember that he cannot transfer to officials the duty of teaching the ignorant, or of restraining and resisting disorderly persons.

We may next notice that each presbyter is apparently intended to combine the three duties of work, governance, and teaching. If we regard these men as clergy we shall see that, as yet, there was only one clerical order. Each official is to discharge all three official functions. The organization is still in its infancy. There is no direct reference to general meetings for worship. These are, however, probably implied in the words 'Despise not prophesyings.' The prophesyings referred

to are almost certainly the ecstatic utterances which often interrupted the course of early Christian meetings and services. With all his love of order and unity, Paul will not allow these irregular manifestations to be repressed or despised. 'Prove all things' probably means 'test all prophesyings'; but possibly the words are intended to have a wider significance, and to point to the necessity for a rationalistic foundation for all doctrine, preaching, and Church organization. No reference is made to the administration of the Sacraments, presumably because there were as yet no controversies about them.

In this brief summary it has not seemed desirable to mention such passages as have no obscurity and no special reference to the special circumstances of the Thessalonians. But the author would hardly be Paul if he had not introduced a number of fervid and elevating thoughts which sometimes seem of the nature of digressions. No doubt their connection with the context was clear enough in the mind of the Apostle. To us they remain isolated but inspiring passages, which throw light on their author's personality and on his relation with one at least of the churches he founded. Paul had, of course, no idea that he was beginning the New Testament; that his letter would ever rank as Scripture; that nineteen hundred years later critics would be subjecting his every phrase to a microscopic scrutiny. Could he have realized this, he would no doubt have avoided difficulties which were no difficulties at all to his Thessalonian converts.

Paul's authorship of the *Second Epistle to the Thessalonians* has been disputed, partly because of its resemblance to and partly because of its differences from the *First Epistle*. It is argued that so original a writer would not have repeated himself in so many passages, and that in some cases there is something like direct contradiction between the two. In the first we are told that the Day of the Lord will come suddenly and unexpectedly, 'like a thief in the night.' But according to the second there are to be various signs and warnings before this Advent.

These arguments, though weighty, are not conclusive. Every writer sometimes repeats himself, especially in letters. Some of the repetitions may be deliberate, others accidental. The alleged contradiction is one which constantly occurs in Apocalypses. The Advent is to be unexpected, and yet signs of its approach are given. Possibly the underlying reconciling idea was that most people would ignore the warnings and so be taken unawares.

Those who refuse to regard the *Second Epistle* as the work of Paul, ought to indicate the motive which they believe to have actuated the writer who adopted the name of the Apostle. It is just conceivable that some later author wished to fortify some of his teaching by claiming that it had come from the Apostle to the Gentiles. On this assumption we should regard the prophecy in the second chapter as the essential point round which the pretended epistle had been built up, largely by the insertion of passages copied with or without modification from the *First Epistle*. Such a theory is tenable, but hardly plausible unless the arguments against the Pauline authorship are regarded as overwhelming.

Another ingenious theory is that the *Second Epistle* was really Paul's, but that it was not addressed to the same people as the *First*. If there was a Jewish Church at Thessalonica more or less separate from the Gentile converts, it would be natural enough that it should receive a separate letter, and yet that in this letter many phrases and sentiments would be repeated or almost repeated. The teaching would in some respects be different, because adapted to a different class of disciples. The Jewish Christians would be much more familiar with the Old Testament and with subsequent Jewish Apocalypses than their Gentile brethren. The assumption however, that there were two churches in Thessalonica has no historical confirmation. On the whole, it seems more reasonable to accept the traditional view that the two Epistles were addressed by the same Apostle to the same persons. At any rate, it is worth while to start

with this assumption and to test it by the actual contents of the two letters.

The *First Epistle* was sent from Corinth, and would appear to have been almost immediately answered by the Thessalonian elders. This reply has unfortunately been lost, but we can gather much of its contents from Paul's rejoinder in the *Second Epistle*. The Apostle had praised the Thessalonians for their Christian virtues. The elders apparently disclaimed such praise. They feared that they did not deserve it. They had, moreover, heard a rumour that Paul had declared that the Second Advent had already arrived. This had caused much perturbation amongst them, for many felt quite unprepared for that Great Day. Then there were persons who would not accept instructions sent by letter, as they could not be sure that the letter was genuine. Evidently the Elders wanted further guidance on these and other matters; and the object of the *Second Epistle to the Thessalonians* was to give such guidance, with fresh encouragement of the faint-hearted and fresh rebuke of the idlers.

The following is a free paraphrase of the essential parts of the Epistle: In spite of your modest disclaiming of praise, 'we are bound to give thanks for that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the love of each one of you all toward one another aboundeth.' You may therefore confidently look forward to the Day of Judgment. I never made, 'either by spirit or by word or by epistle,' any such statement as 'that the day of the Lord is now present.' These words seem to imply that some alleged letter of Paul had been quoted in support of this statement. The Apostle insists that he had always taught that before the Advent there would be a great falling away and a revelation of the Man of Sin, or Lawlessness; 'he that opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God . . . so that he sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God . . . for the mystery of lawlessness doth already work, only there is one that restraineth now, until he be taken out of the

way.' This mysterious Anti-Christ is to come 'according to the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders,' for the ultimate condemnation of those 'who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.' Like many Jewish and Christian Apocalypts, Paul believed that the Messianic Advent was to be preceded by a great manifestation and apparent victory of the Evil Power. We do not know what contemporary incidents led him to think that this mysterious lawlessness was already beginning to work. Perhaps he is only alluding to the hindrances which assailed himself and other Christians, more especially such riotous persecutions as violated Roman laws. It is probable that Paul regarded the Roman Government as that restraining power which, for the present, hindered the complete triumph of lawlessness. Certainly this came, in later years, to be a common Christian idea. Thus Tertullian, in the second century, writes: 'We know that the convulsions of the end of the world, with all their horrors, are delayed by the respite which the Empire gives' (*Apol.* 31, 32). The very name of the reigning Emperor Claudius was supposed to suggest 'the one who shuts out.' Such a fanciful suggestion would hardly have arisen unless the theory of the Empire as a restraining force was already accepted. It must, however, be borne in mind that the Apostle is writing to men already familiar with Apocalyptic teaching and the expected coming of the Son of Perdition. Words that seem most obscure to us would need no explanation to them.

Paul says, in effect: In spite of everything, I am convinced that you Thessalonians are safe, through God's Love. You are sanctified by His Spirit, and have only to persevere. I pray for you, and ask your prayers 'that we may be delivered from unreasonable and evil men.' But you must keep aloof from the disorderly and idle brethren, remembering how I supported myself by my own toil, so as not to be a burden to you, although I had a claim to be supported by you. If any will not work, neither let him eat. If any among you will not

attend to my words, let him be cut off from your company. 'Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.'

As we read these two Epistles, the earliest books of the New Testament, we are struck by their affectionate and confident tone. Paul deals with his converts as a father deals with his children. He is thoroughly confident of their fundamental piety and love; but he recognizes their shortcomings, especially the faint-heartedness of some, the disorderliness of others, and the idleness of yet others. He seems absolutely to ignore the possibility of graver moral defects among the Thessalonians. In putting on Christianity they have completely cast off the worst Pagan vices. Possessing Faith, Hope, and Charity, they have the essential things.

We cannot help wondering whether these early Christians were really as Christian as Paul implies. Some allowance must no doubt be made for his optimism and some for his tact. But on the whole, such evidence as we have, confirms the impression that a moral revolution was constantly produced in the lives of those who adopted Christianity. Those who did so incurred the almost certain prospect of persecution and other injuries social and worldly. There were, however, moral dangers connected with conversion, especially the tendency towards fanaticism; and it is worthy of note that the moral defects which Paul specially notices among the Thessalonians were of this character. The faint-heartedness that he mentions seems to have been essentially a morbid religiousness; a fearfulness which should have been cast out; an anxiety as to whether their own souls were going to be saved or damned; whether the beloved dead could be safely left in God's hands; whether the Day of the Lord was imminent; whether they had so sinned that they were not justified in approaching their Father. Towards such doubters Paul would have us be tender. 'Encourage the faint-hearted, support the weak.' The second class about whom the Apostle is concerned are the disorderly. Here again we have a

failing which was to be expected in the early converts. Christianity was a religion of liberty, possessing neither a law like Judaism, nor the rules and regulations of the heathen religions. It was natural that some of the newly baptized should be led to disparage order, especially as in the fervour of conversion the psychic phenomena called 'speaking with tongues' and 'prophesying' became very common. Paul himself was an ardent believer in liberty, but he hated confusion. He would not attack even slavery or the subordination of women, so anxious was he not to upset Social Institutions. Still less would he tolerate the introduction of insubordination into the churches. The word he uses for 'disorderly' is a military term, applied to a soldier who leaves his place in the ranks. If the faint-hearted are to be encouraged, the disorderly are to be restrained. As for the idlers—their sin, too, was closely connected with their religious environment. Primitive Christianity was so exciting that it turned many from the humdrum drudgery of daily life to the raptures and fervours of the new religion. Moreover, the expectation of the speedy Coming of Christ made the drudgery seem less necessary. Paul set himself firmly against all such excuses for idleness. As in the *First Epistle* he wrote: 'Study to be quiet, and to do your own business and to work with your hands,' so in the *Second Epistle* he writes: 'For we hear of some that work not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such, we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work and eat their own bread.' And again: 'If any will not work, neither let him eat.' Paul shows little sympathy with the communistic ideas which had led the first disciples to make their socialistic experiment (*Acts* iv. 34 to 36); nor did he consider the prospect of the speedy Coming of Christ any sufficient ground for neglecting business. He taught the duty of almsgiving and of helping the poor, but even in this matter, as we shall see in a later Epistle, he rather discouraged sentimental appeals. He constantly urges sobriety and

moderation, and lays the greatest stress upon the steady building up of character. This fact is the more noteworthy when we consider the very affectionate nature of the Epistles. They are outpourings of the heart rather than deliberate literary productions. The Thessalonians are his 'pride and joy.' He cherishes them as a nurse cherishes her charges, or a parent his children. He had yearned for tidings of them, and when good news came his heart was filled with thankfulness, but the yearning to be with them in the flesh remained.

So far as we know, Paul wrote no Epistles in the years between A.D. 51 (when, according to the chronology I adopt, both letters to the Thessalonians were written) and the year A.D. 54 or 55, to which I assign the *First Epistle to the Corinthians*. A brief sketch of his career during this interval may here be introduced.

From *Acts* xviii. we gather that he now visited Ephesus, where he found a form of Christianity associated with the 'Baptism of John.' This seems to have been orthodox on the historical side, but lacking in the spiritual elements of Christianity. It recognized Jesus as the promised Messiah, but knew nothing of the Holy Ghost. The chief of the Ephesian teachers was a man named Apollos, a learned and eloquent Jew. He was more fully instructed by Paul's disciples, Priscilla and her husband Aquila, who were left behind by the Apostle when he departed from Ephesus. Apollos became a great Christian preacher, preferred by some to Paul himself. It is at least possible that he wrote the *Epistle to the Hebrews*.

Ephesus was the commercial capital of the province of 'Asia,' and in due course became a great mother church. Already round Corinth and Antioch a series of daughter churches were growing up. Macedonia, Achaia, Galatia, and 'Asia' were throbbing with Christian life. Paul was beginning to think imperially, but everywhere he was still faced by obstacles. The chief of these were:

(1) The Government—in theory neutral, but hostile to disorder, and therefore often ill-disposed towards a

movement which, however unwillingly, was frequently the cause of riots and confusion.

(2) The Christian Jews. Despite the decision of the Jerusalem Council, this party could not genuinely reconcile itself to the idea of Gentile converts.

(3) The Unbelieving Jews. These occasionally gave a courteous hearing to their Christian fellow-countrymen, but they were bitterly hostile to Gentile claims.

(4) The magicians and the devotees of oriental religions, superstitions, and philosophies. These varied in their character and attitude. Some of them were probably mere charlatans. Some tried to work charms by invoking the Jesus whom Paul preached. Some were men of real skill and knowledge, versed in those mystic arts on the border-line between the natural and the supernatural. Some represented religions and philosophies which did more or less meet human needs.

(5) The greatest hindrance of all lay inherently in human nature. Ordinary men and women resented the demands of the new religion upon their lives and characters, upon their wills, their affections, and intellects. In some cases, too, the Christian attacks on idolatry seriously affected vested interests, as in an instance which we shall presently have to consider (*Acts* xix.).

But we must first deal with the remarkable correspondence between Paul and the Church at Corinth. Part of this correspondence has perished. The surviving portion is found in the New Testament books. We shall see that what is called the *Second Epistle to the Corinthians* possibly contains portions of two separate letters, which have somehow or other got joined together.

NOTE ON CHAPTER II

Baur (trans. Menzies, 1876), regarded neither of the Thessalonian Epistles as Pauline, and this view had been previously upheld by Schrader; but the arguments of Hilgenfeld, Lightfoot, Sabatier, Zahn, and others seem to prove that the First

Epistle at any rate is the work of Paul. The letter was certainly attributed to him early in the Second Century—*e.g.*, by Irenæus; and we find it both in *Marcion* and in the Muratorian lists (see Chapter XXII.). When compared with Paul's next group of Epistles, it must be admitted that *I. Thessalonians* is remarkably silent on the Pauline doctrines connected with the Atonement; but this fact agrees with the development of doctrine in the Primitive Church, which was at first more concerned with the prospect of the Second Advent than with the Crucifixion. It is probable that the closing words of ii. 16 were a later insertion, and referred to the Fall of Jerusalem (A.D. 70), (so Spitta, Schmiedel, Drummond, etc.). Rendel Harris (*Expositor V.*, 8), Bacon (*Story of St. Paul*, 1903), and others maintain that *I. Thessalonians* was a reply to a letter from Thessalonica. Their arguments are weighty but not conclusive. The Pauline authorship of all or part of *II. Thessalonians* has been denied by many critics (Hilgenfeld, van Manen, Spitta, Wrede, von Soden, etc.); but these authorities differ widely in their conceptions of how, when, and with what object, the Epistle was built up. The tendency of the latest criticism is to support the traditional view. Among 'advanced' critics who defend the Pauline authorship are Wernle, Jülicher, K. Lake, and A. S. Peake.

Although the Thessalonian Epistles are the earliest of the New Testament Books, fragments of still earlier date may be incorporated in some other Epistles, and in the Matthew and Luke Gospels. Parts of James, for example, were probably written before the Crucifixion (see Chapter XIII.).

Among modern Commentaries, Frame (I.C.C., 1912) may be specially recommended, as also Adeney (C.B., 1902); Moffatt (Ex. G.T., 1910); G. Milligan (1908) and Findlay (C.G.T., 1904).

CHAPTER III

THE CORINTHIAN CORRESPONDENCE—I.

The First Epistle to the Corinthians (A.D. 54 or 55)

The circumstances attending the foundation of the Corinthian Church are narrated in *Acts* xviii. Paul, Aquila, and Priscilla co-operated in the work. They began, as usual, by preaching in the synagogue, attempting to convince Jews, Proselytes, and God-fearers that the Messiah for whom they looked, had really come. Rejected by the synagogue, they pursued their task from the house of Titus, a Gentile attached to Judaism. Several persons of good position joined the Corinthian Church, but, as usual, the converts were chiefly drawn from the lower orders. Paul refused a salary, and would not take fees from his hearers, preferring, as he had done at Thessalonica, to support himself by his own labours. After eighteen months of preaching he was prosecuted before Gallio, who had arrived in Corinth about the middle of A.D. 51. Twelve months later he settled for two years and a quarter at Ephesus, where he wrote the *First Epistle to the Corinthians,* probably in A.D. 54.

Paul appears to have written four or possibly five letters to the Corinthians. In *I. Cor.* v. 9 we have a reference to one of these letters, of which we know little except that it contained a command not to keep company with fornicators. The Corinthians understood this to mean that they were to cut themselves off from Pagan society, since fornication was taken as a matter of course among the Pagans of Corinth. In a second letter, which we call the *First Epistle,* Paul replies that this was not his meaning. He was thinking of professed Christians who set at naught the Christian morality. He did

not mean that Pagans were to be judged by the same standard (*I. Cor.* v. 12). This proves, of course, that Paul had written a letter to the Corinthians before what we call the *First Epistle*. Another letter, wholly or partly lost, must have been written between our *First* and *Second Epistles*. This is that letter written 'with anguish of heart' and 'many tears,' referred to in *II. Cor.* ii. 4. Many critics hold that chapters x. to xiii. of the *Second Epistle* are a fragment of this letter, which had somehow become incorporated in *II. Corinthians*. There is, however, nothing in this fragment suggestive of tears and anguish. Paul's letters to the Corinthians may therefore be regarded as four or five in number—viz.:

(1) *A letter, now lost.* It is possible, however, that *II. Cor.* vi. 14 to vii. 1 is a fragment of this lost letter. In its present position it has no connection with the context, while if we remove it there is no sort of logical break between vi. 13 and vii. 2.

(2) *Our First Epistle.*

(3) *The letter written 'with anguish of heart,' partly or wholly lost.*

(4) *Chapters i. to ix. of our Second Epistle.*

(5) *II. Cor. x. to xiii. may be part of (3) or of (4).* It does not, however, seem to belong to either of these. Anyone who carefully examines our *Second Epistle* must be struck by the abrupt change of subject and mental attitude which the tenth chapter introduces; but, on the other hand, there is nothing in this fragment to suggest that it was written in anguish of heart and with tears. It seems likely, therefore, that it is a fragment of a fifth letter.

Let us now turn to *I. Corinthians*. After an introductory salutation and thanksgiving, the Apostle straightway attacks the question of parties and party spirit. He has heard that the Corinthian Church was divided into four parties, claiming to be the followers of Paul, Apollos, Peter, and Christ. Respecting the exact tenets of these four parties he gives no information. We

presume that the name of Paul appealed specially to those who regarded the Judaic system as entirely superseded; while Peter's name, given as Cephas, naturally suggests the party which was attached to Jewish customs. We can only guess at the significance of the other two parties. Apollos was an Alexandrian, and had presumably superadded Alexandrian mysticism and philosophy to the simple Gospel preached by Paul. As for the Christ party, they, perhaps, laid special stress upon the earthly Life and Teaching of the Master. We have now reached the age of those lost documents upon which our first three Gospels are largely founded (see Chapter XV.). Hitherto the Christian teachers had been so absorbed by thoughts of the Messiahship and the Resurrection of Christ that they had spoken comparatively little of the Three Years Ministry, the Miracles, the Parables, the Life spent in doing good. A renewed interest in all these characterized the period A.D. 50-70, and may have led to the formation of what could call itself the 'Christ party.'

Paul, however, throws little light on this question. What moved him was not the differences of opinion, but the growth of party spirit, of 'contentions' and 'jealousies' and 'strife.' He was especially pained that his own name should be used as a party cry. 'Was Paul crucified for you?' he asks; 'or were ye baptized into the name of Paul?' (i. 13). He even thanks God that he had baptized hardly any of the Corinthian converts, so that they could not have even this excuse for calling themselves 'of Paul.' His expostulations seem to have been effective. We hear little more of these four parties, though there is a reference to one of them in the *Second Epistle*. Nevertheless, the schismatic spirit kept breaking out afresh in the Christian churches, and has shown itself in ever-changing forms down to our own time.

How horrible this spirit seemed to the Apostle is manifest from the way in which he recurs to these party names in the first four chapters of our Epistle. But he

also digresses continually, contrasting the doctrine of the Cross with the wisdom of this world, with the Jewish love of signs and the Greek love of philosophy. He had preached simply the Cross, and that without eloquence or rhetoric (ii. 2). Even the Resurrection has for the moment passed into the background of his consciousness, so absorbed is he in the thought of the Crucifixion, the perfect self-sacrifice, in contrast to the self-assertion which is the mark of the 'carnal mind and the root of the party spirit.' For when one saith, 'I am of Paul, and another I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal?' Paul had planted and Apollos had watered, but God alone gives the increase; or, to change the metaphor, Paul laid a foundation and Apollos had built thereon, but the real foundation was Jesus Christ. On Him we all build, and the fire of God will test our work. If it will not endure that test it will burn. We ourselves shall be saved, 'yet so as through fire' (iii. 4-15). Paul, Apollos, and Peter are all alike in that they are all persecuted. This persecution, and not the leadership of parties, is their distinction (iv. 6-13).

Yet the Apostle, while refusing to be regarded as the leader of a party, claims the right of admonishing the Corinthians as a father admonishes his children. He has sent Timothy as his spokesman, and he now proposes to come himself, either 'with a rod or in love,' according to how the Corinthians receive the present admonitions. This leads on to a most serious matter. Paul has heard that a member of the Corinthian Church is actually living in fornication with his own stepmother, and the Church is apparently so absorbed in controversy that it acquiesces in this abomination. Paul, therefore, from distant Ephesus, pronounces judgment. The offender is to be delivered unto Satan for 'the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved' (v. 5). Such delivery unto Satan implied a complete cutting off of the offender from all Christian privileges and social intercourse.

In a former letter the Corinthian Christians had been

told to 'have no company with fornicators.' They were mistaken in supposing that this meant that they were to cut themselves off entirely from the impure heathen world around them. The case of a professed Christian guilty of such an offence must, however, be treated with the utmost sternness. The judgment of the heathen may be left to God, but the Corinthians must not shrink from judging those who profess Christianity. Believers should not make use of the heathen law courts to decide questions that arose between Christians. The saints are ultimately to judge the world, and even the angels. Why, then, should they hesitate to pass judgment in the present case?

This passage is very obscure. There may be a reference to the Daniel prophecy—'until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given to the saints' (*Dan.* vii. 22)—or to such passages as 'They shall judge the nations and have dominion over the people' (*Wisd.* iii. 8). We do not know whence Paul derived the idea that the saints would judge the angels. Probably he found it in some Jewish Apocalypse, now lost to us. The Jews considered that each synagogue had jurisdiction over its own members. No Pagan sect held a corresponding doctrine. Paul, for once, was supporting the Jewish precedent against the Gentile; but that Christians should not go to law with Christians seems to have been an accepted principle referred to here for the purpose of the argument, and not a new rule propounded by the Apostle. This principle was being violated by some of the Corinthians, and the Christian law of Purity was being flagrantly broken. The Church was apparently leaving the offence to be dealt with by a heathen law court instead of passing its own judgment. This leads to a digression on the principles of Christian chastity. Asceticism was spreading in the Church, and the fact that the end of the world was expected in the immediate future gave an added plausibility to the theory that sexual intercourse should be discontinued. Paul was so far ascetic that he held that complete abstinence was,

in present circumstances, the highest course; but he considered marriage to be, for many, the only practical alternative to impurity. He felt that marriage was neither necessary nor admissible for himself, but that in this matter men differed greatly. Let the married discharge their implied obligation. The unmarried were at liberty to marry, provided that they remained faithful to one another. The case, however, of a Christian married to a heathen seemed to Paul so difficult that he would not lay down any rules as of Divine authority; but, in his present judgment, the Christian should remain faithful to the bond unless the heathen partner should insist on violating it. In that case the Christian was no longer bound (vii. 15). This doctrine will seem rather startling to those who regard the indissolubility of marriage as a universal Christian law. They must extract what comfort they can from Paul's disclaimer of authority and his evident hesitation to allow even this one exception to the general principle.

The Apostle shows no such hesitation about the next practical difficulty with which he deals. He decides that Jewish converts are to remain Jews after their conversion, but that Gentile converts must refuse to be circumcised. Similarly, a slave must be content to remain a slave unless he can secure freedom by legal methods. There is nothing discreditable in being a slave, for one who has earned that Liberty of spirit which is part of the Christian heritage. But on the question of celibacy, to which Paul returns again, he insists that he has received 'no commandment from the Lord'; only, so far as he can judge, and in view of the prospect of persecution and of the duty of devoting all energies to religion, he certainly thinks that marriage is to be avoided, if it can be avoided without sin. Nevertheless, fathers are not to exert their authority to prevent their daughters from marrying (vii. 25-40).

This whole Epistle is specially interesting from the light that it throws on the problems which the early Church had to solve. In the eighth chapter Paul turns

to another of such problems. What are Christians to do about things sacrificed to idols? If a Corinthian Christian refused to give any sort of countenance to anything associated with idols, he could hardly partake of a meal with a Pagan host, and he could not hold any official position. Yet, if he behaved as though idolatrous rites were matters of no significance, he would seem to be making a truce with Paganism. Paul tries to indicate a middle course. An idol is nothing in itself, but a man who connives at an idolatrous rite against the dictates of his conscience is a traitor. To eat something that has been offered to an idol is in itself no sin, but such a course of action might hurt weaker brethren, or tempt others to imagine that there is no great harm in idolatry. To loosen a man's religious convictions, or even to wound his conscience, is a sin against Christ (viii. 1-13). In explanation of his principles Paul points to his own practice. He claims to be an Apostle to his Corinthian converts, if not to others. He has certainly a right to exercise freedom as to what he eats and drinks. He has a right to marry as other Apostles have done. He has a right to an Apostle's salary. But he has refused to exercise any of these rights (ix. 15). He has deliberately decided to forego marriage, and to decline a salary. He has conformed to Jewish rules in order to win Jews to Christ, and yet he has also preached the complete freedom of the Gentiles, so that he may also convert those who are not under the law. He has deliberately set himself to become all things to all men, so that he may save some. He has kept his body in subjection as an athlete goes into training, refusing things that are not in themselves wrong, but which might hinder him from winning the prize he has set before him (ix. 1-27).

At this point Paul digresses into a characteristic exposition of the Old Testament. To him the stories in the sacred books were allegories. Thus he thinks of the passage of the Red Sea, not so much as an historical deliverance from the Egyptians, but rather as a type of Christian Baptism. To him, again, the true Manna

given to the Jews was not food for the body, but the spiritual nourishment of God's people. The Pillar of Cloud was not a physical phenomenon, but a spiritual guide. Our fathers ' were baptized unto (literally *into*) Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of a spiritual Rock that followed them: and the rock was Christ.' These words remind us that Paul was a Mystic and a Sacramentalist, and not merely a wise teacher and organizer, intensely interested in practical questions of Christian ethics. Baptism and Communion were to him witnesses of facts that existed long before their institution as Sacraments. The Cloud and the Sea were Baptismal waters. The Manna falling from Heaven and the Stream springing from the Rock were consecrated Elements. Their efficacy was not destroyed by the ignorance and sin of those who partook of them. It grew out of the fact that they came from the Father, and from the Christ Who had existed from the beginning, long before He became incarnate. But in spite of these heavenly gifts, the people were rebellious (x. 5-10). Now these things were written for our admonition. We are liable to the same sins, but God will not suffer us to be tempted beyond our power to resist. He will provide us with a way of escape, and that especially by the Cup of Blessing and the Bread which we break; for through these we participate in Christ's Blood and Body (x. 11-18). This brings Paul's thoughts back once more to the practical difficulties about food that had been offered to idols. In his earliest treatment of the subject he had dealt with idolatry as a worship of gods that do not exist. Now he thinks of these gods as devils. The apparent inconsistency does not seem to trouble him. At any rate, he never attempts to synthesize the two ideas—that an idol (and presumably evil generally) is nothing—the mere absence of good; and that it is something positive, the work of devils.

We must remember that the belief in ' possession ' by evil spirits had found general acceptance. A religious

rite before a meal was a sort of charm to drive away a demon or to attract a protective deity, for whom a place would even be provided at the banquet. In some religions the food mystically became the god. In others all that was expected was that the charm would drive away a demon, were it only the demon that gives men indigestion. In the matter of meats offered to idols, the practical conclusion is much the same, whether the idol is nothing or is a devil. Christians may buy from heathen butchers and eat, and they may partake of meals provided by heathen hosts, asking no questions. But if their attention is especially called to the fact that the food has been offered to idols in heathen festivals, they would do better to abstain from it, for the sake of the weaker brethren. In either cases they are justified by the fact that 'the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof.' The whole difficulty grew, of course, out of the fact that Society was organized on a Pagan basis. Meetings and banquets opened with Pagan invocations and rites. Any meat set before the guests might have been cut from the body of a sacrificed victim. In *Romans* Paul returns to the question, How is a Christian to conduct himself in a Pagan Society? Is he to refuse to have anything to do with all social and political life? Is he to refuse to hold any office or to accept any invitation just because these might involve some apparent acquiescence in Paganism? That would mean that he 'must needs go out of the world' (*I. Cor.* v. 10), and so lose opportunities of influence as well as of reasonable social intercourse and recreation. Some, indeed, did so, and thereby earned the reputation of being morose and unpatriotic. Paul's rule is: Hesitate to judge one another in such matters. Hold fast to your convictions, but consider always how any action of yours affects others. So far as the passages differ, we may say that in *Corinthians* Paul lays more stress upon Freedom, and in *Romans* upon Love. He had come to realize more fully that we are all more alive to our own rights, than to the duty of considering those of others.

The next practical question with which the Apostle deals is the subordination of women. In theology Paul was a great revolutionist, but in all social and political matters his instincts were conservative, and he was very anxious that the religion which he taught should not be associated with attacks upon existing institutions and conventions. He upheld the authority of the Roman Government. He acquiesced in the existence of slavery, even appearing to give a certain amount of sanction to this horrible system, which seems to us so opposed to the Christian spirit. Similarly, he would not encourage the emancipation of women from that subordinate place which they occupied in oriental countries. He taught, indeed, that the distinction of sex was 'in Christ' insignificant. A woman's soul is equal to a man's in the sight of God. Her liberty as a Christian is the same as his. But Paul would not allow this equality to entitle a woman to exercise the same privileges as a man, either in Society or in the Church. He even laid it down that 'the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is the man.' The special point to which he applies this principle in our eleventh chapter is the question whether women might unveil their faces when taking part in a Christian service, 'praying or prophesying.' Such unveiling he altogether condemns. His arguments on this point do not seem very convincing to a modern reader; one of them is, in fact, unintelligible to us. A woman, he says, is to wear 'a sign of authority'—*i.e.*, the veil, 'because of the angels' (xi. 10). Whether this means because even the angels are veiled in God's presence (*cf. Isa.* vi. 2), or because evil angels might tempt and be tempted by unveiled women (*cf. Gen.* vi. 2), or because good angels are pleased by the sight of outward marks of modesty, or whether any of the other suggested interpretations are to be preferred, we cannot say. It is worth while to notice, however, that Paul seems here definitely to sanction the taking of a prominent part in the services by women, provided that they are veiled. The 'praying' was

probably public extempore prayer; the 'prophesying' was certainly a kind of preaching, under the inspiration, as was believed, of the Holy Ghost. The Apostle makes no objection to the performing of these functions by women. In the eleventh and twelfth verses he even recognizes a sort of equality between the sexes, since each is equally essential to the other. Finally, he seems to see that his arguments against 'unveiling' are not very convincing, and he treats the whole matter as one of custom and order (xi. 16), making it appear that he objects to women unveiling their faces on the ground that this was a social convention which Christians would do better to observe.

Paul passes on to discuss some questions relating to the Lord's Supper. Disorders have arisen which he connects with the party spirit and the heresies that he had already rebuked. The scrambling for food and the greediness manifested at the common meal are regarded by him as types of the quarrels and fruits of the heresies. This leads him to remind his hearers of the institution of the Sacrament of the Last Supper of the Lord, and of the fact that in partaking of the Communion they are proclaiming the self-sacrifice of the Crucifixion. Those who eat and drink unworthily—*i.e.*, without accepting the law of self-sacrifice—are 'guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.' They are identifying themselves with His murderers. Paul even attributes the prevalence of disease and in some cases of death, to this flagrant selfishness which is typified by the scrambling and the greediness to which he had referred. He then declares his intention of reorganizing the service when he comes to Corinth (xi. 34). This, perhaps, points to the changes which were soon afterwards made in the mode of Celebration. At first the Sacrament was connected with a common meal, probably a supper. Subsequently it was placed at the beginning of the Lord's Day, or at least in the forenoon; and instead of being preceded by a common meal, the Sacrament was isolated and eventually made the first eating and drinking of the day. We

cannot even approximately date this gradual evolution, or say whether it was completed in Apostolic times.

Paul next turns from matters that have to be regulated by ecclesiastical order, to more spiritual things; and he begins by declaring what seems to us somewhat superfluous—that 'no man speaking in the Spirit of God saith Jesus is anathema' (xii. 1-3). This is, perhaps, directed against those who while glorifying the invisible Christ disparaged the Peasant of Nazareth. Paul himself may have been suspected of this heresy, because he has so little to say concerning that Life spent in doing good, which was soon to be the subject of several Gospels. Paul has much to say of the pre-existent Christ, that spiritual Rock from which his ancestors drank. He says much of the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, and the Second Advent; but he almost ignores the Life of Our Lord between the Incarnation and the Last Supper. It is even possible that his authority was claimed for the strange view that Jesus was not Divine until the Spirit descended on Him at His Baptism. This heresy might be exaggerated into the statement that Jesus, as distinguished from Christ, was anathema, according to that distorted view of the Atonement under which Jesus was represented as subject to His Father's wrath, and therefore under the Divine curse. At any rate, we must assume that some professing Christians were saying that Jesus was, in some sense, anathema.

Paul next compares the variety of God's 'spiritual gifts' with the diversity of the members of the human body, each of which discharges its own peculiar functions and is necessary for bodily health (xii. 4-31). This leads him on to the famous glorification of Love, compared with which even Faith and Hope must take a secondary place. Paul's theology and temperament are alike illuminated by this splendid lyric (xiii.). When he seems to give the chief importance to Faith, and again when he appears harsh and stern, we should turn to this chapter to understand his meaning. Then we realize that to the Apostle true faith must be rooted in

love, and that if he sometimes seems fierce it is with a fierceness growing out of love, even for those whom he attacks.

In the fourteenth chapter he turns from what, in modern language, is the most spiritual of all gifts, to talk of those gifts which, in the technical language of the Church, were specially called ' spiritual '—the speaking under what was regarded as the direct inspiration of the Spirit. This took two forms—the gift of Tongues and the gift of Prophecy. In the former men uttered unintelligible sounds. In the latter their words, though often wild, were comprehensible. To such rational speaking Paul naturally gives the higher place (xiv. 3-6). He does not doubt that unintelligible words may be inspired, but at best they are like a trumpet giving forth an uncertain sound, while the words that have a meaning are like a trumpet giving clear summons to battle. ' There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and no kind is without signification.' An ' unknown tongue ' may be an outcome of the Spirit, but it needs to be supplemented or interpreted by the understanding (xiv. 10-19). Mysterious unintelligible utterances may impress those who already believe, but they will seem mere signs of madness to unbelievers, who might be led to worship and recognize God's presence by intelligible ' prophecy ' (xiv. 22-25).

From the passage that follows we gather that the services of the early Christians were sometimes a rather chaotic mixture of psalm-singing, preaching, praying, and speaking in unknown tongues. Paul pleads for a more orderly system. He admits that the confusion may be due to inspiration, but the inspiration of prophets should be subject to the prophets, and ' God is not a God of confusion, but of peace.' In an earlier passage the Apostle had seemed to sanction the prophesying of women, but he now declares that they should keep silence in the churches. It may be that while one side of his nature really objected to the silencing of women, yet in his desire for order and his dread of helping

forward what would, in that age and country, amount to a revolution in the relation of the sexes, he finally decided on a more conservative policy (xiv. 34-35). It is a mistake to think of Paul as a logician or even as a philosopher. His fervent spirit carried him through the most stormy crises. He dealt with difficulty after difficulty as it arose, but it was with the practical insight of a statesman, the affection of a father to his children, and the zeal of a Christian against every form of wrong, rather than with the precision of a scholar. Nothing is easier than to point out apparent contradictions, sometimes within a few verses of one another, but Paul has the higher consistency that comes from unity of purpose and loftiness of aim. He becomes all things to all men, that he may save some; but yet he only stoops to conquer. He remains the colossal figure, the leader, stimulating and controlling the infant Churches which he had founded.

In his fifteenth chapter he once more proclaims his essential Gospel of the Crucifixion and the Resurrection. This time it is the latter on which he chiefly dwells. For it seems that in the general chaos of Corinthian Christianity, there were some of the brethren who did not believe in the future life. The Apostle insists that Christ's Resurrection is a pledge of the future resurrection of all men. As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order. First they that are Christ's; then the rest of the human race; till God is all in all. This proclamation of *universal* salvation leads on to a reference to the practice of being baptized for the dead. It was natural that converts from Heathenism or Judaism should wish their beloved dead to share in the benefits of the Sacrifice of Christ, and apparently the infant Church tried to satisfy this yearning by allowing converts to go through a form of baptism for those whom they had loved and lost. Paul seems to sanction this practice, but he points out that the form would be absurd if there were no salvation save for those who had died in Christ. Similarly, the endurance of

persecution and martyrdom was evidence of the Church's belief in a universal resurrection; otherwise 'let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die' (xv. 21-32). As usual, we must not push the argument beyond its original intention. It is incredible that Paul intended to limit the obligation of self-sacrifice to those who believed in a future life. So he goes on to quote from a *Pagan* writer, as to the danger of evil communications, and to affirm that the form of unbelief of which he is speaking springs from ignorance of God's Character (xv. 35-36). Knowledge of God's Character is the real ground for believing in a Future Life. As for the question 'How are the dead raised, and with what body do they come?' the Apostle argues in effect that we must leave this to God, Who gives to every seed we plant an appropriate form. So will it be with us. Our natural bodies are like the seed planted in the earth; our spiritual bodies will be like the perfected plant. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, but we shall have heavenly bodies in the future life. At the sound of the last trumpet we shall be changed, and death will be swallowed up in victory. For the sting of death is sin, and the destruction of sin involves the destruction of death. This Apocalypse is in parts obscure, but its general significance can hardly be mistaken except by those who try to interpret it according to their own opinions. Paul plainly believes in a universal redemption, which will include a redemption of men's bodies. The risen bodies will not, however, be flesh and blood, but something spiritual. Of this spiritual body the Apostle can tell us little except the fact that it will be spiritual, and yet that it will somehow or other be evolved out of the natural, partly by a growth as of a plant out of a seed, partly by a change, which he declares to be a 'mystery.' From this argument he deduces that we are to persevere in the work of the Lord, knowing that such labour is not in vain (xv. 35-58).

This leads on to the practical question of the collecting of money for the Christians in Jerusalem. Christian

converts were for the most part poor men; but in a busy commercial centre like Corinth, only deliberate idlers or weaklings would be in abject poverty. In Jerusalem it was very different. The Temple attracted many for whose work there was little demand. The proportion of incapables would naturally be large. Paul was probably especially anxious to show his affection for a church towards which his attitude had sometimes appeared hostile. Though he needs must oppose the policy of the Judaizers, yet he longed to help his poorer brethren in the Holy City. So he bids the Corinthian, as he bids the Galatian churches, to have collections made for this purpose every Sunday. He was anxious that this should be done before he arrived in Corinth, for he was unwilling to make a personal appeal. He did not wish to utilize for the purpose of raising money, the emotion which his arrival and preaching would arouse (xvi. 1-4).

Paul then explains that until Pentecost he must stay at Ephesus, where there is much to be done, and many adversaries to contend with. Then he will travel through Macedonia, and finally he hopes to be in Corinth, for the whole winter. In the meantime, he had asked Apollos to represent him, thus proving that the two men were not rivals. Apollos was not able to go to Corinth, but Timothy might be able to do so, and in that case should be warmly welcomed. Meanwhile the Corinthians must be faithful, brave, and above all things loving. The Epistle concludes with personal messages from the Apostle and others. Paul had, as usual, dictated his letter, but he ends it with a few words in his own handwriting.

NOTE ON CHAPTER III

PAUL AND 'MYSTERY' RELIGIONS.—Some critics tell us that Paul found Christianity a mere party in the Jewish Church, and that he transformed it into one of those great 'mystery' religions which were so striking a feature in the Roman Empire of the early centuries. Their investigations have

thrown a flood of light on *Colossians, Ephesians,* and *Philippians,* and have helped us to realize the character of the great missionary who, educated in a narrow Judaism, set himself, almost single-handed, to conquer the Roman Empire, and succeeded in planting Christianity along the easterly shores of the Mediterranean.

The resemblances between Pauline Christianity and the oriental mystery religions are more obvious, though not I think more important, than the differences between them. The mystery religions differed from the old national religions in having no racial boundaries. If a man was born a Roman or a Jew, he was born, so to speak, into the Roman or the Jewish religion; but the mysteries were religions voluntarily adopted by individuals, so that in each cult there could be, and usually were, men of any number of different races. In this respect, of course, Pauline Christianity resembled the mystery religions. In Christ Jesus there was 'neither Jew nor Gentile.'

Again, all the mystery religions had initiation services, corresponding to Baptism in the Catholic Church, and differing fundamentally from that Circumcision which the Jewish Christian regarded as the initiation service, despite Paul's doctrine that in Christianity Circumcision counted for nothing, and might even be worse than useless. Something the same holds of the Communion. In most, if not all the mystery religions, initiation was followed by rites in which the initiated one was thought to feed upon his god—Adonis, Dionysus, Mithras, Isis. The god was generally represented as a Saviour who was slain and then restored to life. By feeding on him, the worshipper was made part of his deity, and came to share his immortality. The analogies between such religions and Pauline Christianity are obvious. The difficulty lies in determining how far Paul's conceptions were original; how far they were based on the teaching of Jesus; how far borrowed from the mystery religions. The four Gospels were probably all written after the death of Paul; certainly after the Pauline Epistles. We have no evidence of the extent of his knowledge of the contents of these Gospels, but his sublime ethics and his conception of the character of God as Fatherly towards all men, transcend too completely anything that we find in contemporary religions, and corre-

spond too closely with the Teaching of Jesus, to make us hesitate to regard Paul's doctrine as based rather on the latter than on the former.

The essence of the oriental mystery religions was that they 'held out the offer of happiness in this world and salvation in the next to all who, by initiation into their sacraments, joined in the risen life of a redeemer god.' If then Pauline Christianity is to be regarded as a mystery religion, it should offer happiness here and salvation hereafter through initiation by Baptism, and nourishment in the Eucharistic Communion. At each point there is room for question. The earthly life of the Christian was to be one of sorrow rather than of happiness; and the offered salvation was for this world quite as much as for the next. Above all it seems clear that the prescription offered by Paul was the attaining to a state of mind (faith), rather than the participation in mystic rites (sacraments). I do not wish to depreciate the interest and importance of the parallelism between the Christian Sacraments and the initiatory and other rites of contemporary mystery religions. It is quite probable that to many outsiders Christianity seemed merely one among the many oriental religions which were invading the Roman world in the first century; with Christ in the place of Adonis, or Isis, or Mithras. Again it may be admitted that the oriental mystery cults greatly influenced the development of the Church. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that the Sacraments became in the next century the real centre of Catholicism, and the historical explanation of this fact is partly to be found in the prevalence of mystery religions. Converts from such sects would naturally help to push the Church in a sacramental direction. Moreover, the Church would naturally seek to satisfy those yearnings of the human heart which were responsible for the growth of mystery religions. Germs of sacramentalism may well be discoverable in Pauline and also in Johannine Christianity; but to regard the Sacraments as the centres of any kind of Apostolic Christianity seems a quite untenable paradox.

The exact relation of the oriental cults to early Christianity can best be realized by a study of the rise and growth of Gnosticism. We have now learned to think of Gnostic ideas as growing up in a period earlier than Christianity,

and largely as a result of the contact of mystery religions with Greek philosophy. A philosopher who felt the need of something either more emotional or more ritualistic than his philosophy, would naturally be attracted to a mystery religion, and would be able to accept its irrational elements by allegorizing them away, or by regarding them as symbols of spiritual truth. Conversely, there would be some oriental religionists to whom a rationalization of their cult would be welcome. Christianity was naturally influenced by these complex movements and their reactions; but to call Pauline Christianity one of the oriental mystery religions seems to me no more reasonable than to call it one of the Greek schools of philosophy, or one of the Judaic sects.

The fullest references to the Sacraments in the writings of Paul occur in *I. Cor.* Some Corinthians apparently held that having been baptized, they were saved. Paul points out that the Israelites had been baptized and yet had fallen away and been punished. Notice that he treats the passage through the Red Sea as a Baptism, though, of course, this Baptism was not of the ecclesiastical sort. If Christianity had been a mystery religion, its initiatory rite would have been defined. Christian Baptism would only be valid if in the Name of the Trinity, or, at least, of the Lord Jesus. Similarly for a valid Eucharist there were essentials which certainly were not present in the Manna of the wilderness. Paul, however, does not hesitate to say that the old Jews 'did all eat the same spiritual meat and did all drink the same spiritual drink (*I. Cor.* x. 4). The rites of a mystery religion, validly performed, made the worshipper safe. Paul's whole argument implies that the Sacrament might be just as valid without the usual forms, and that in neither case did it ensure safety. The Israelites were baptized in the Red Sea, and they partook of the Divine Food; yet they fell away and were punished. Evidently there were some Corinthians who regarded Christianity as a mystery religion, with magical sacraments. But the Apostle entirely dissociates himself from this view. His account of the Institution of the Lord's Supper, and his criticism of the Corinthian mode of celebrating it, point in the same direction. There is no hint of a magical rite. Historical facts and ethical considerations are all that matter. Paul tells the story of the Last Supper and contrasts it with the Corinthian

eucharists. He regards the Christian service as a commemoration of the Crucifixion (*I. Cor.* xi. 26), and as a partaking of Christ's Body and Blood (*I. Cor.* x. 16); but he nowhere hints that it is a sort of charm for securing happiness in this world and salvation in the next.

If we now turn from *I. Cor.* to Paul's other Epistles, we are struck by the rarity and slightness of the references to the Sacraments. This applies equally to the earlier Epistles in which religion is mainly thought of as a matter that concerns individual souls, and the later Epistles in which there is some reference to the beloved Society which the Apostle came to think of as the Body of the Lord. And such references as there are do not seem to imply any resemblance to the oriental mystery rites. In *Rom.* vi. 3 and 4, and in *Col.* ii. 12, Baptism is spoken of as a sort of burial. Otherwise I know of nothing outside *I. Cor.* throwing any light on Paul's doctrine of the Sacraments. No doubt he took them for granted, as part of the Christian system, but when he is contrasting his religion with Judaism, or with idolatry, or with any form of paganism, it does not seem to occur to him to lay stress on the Sacraments—such stress as he lays on Grace, Faith, and the Atonement, on the Resurrection, on the Indwelling Christ in the Old Testament Scriptures. Perhaps the Sacraments were so much taken for granted that references to them were unecessary, but if so, they must have been the Sacraments as accepted *before* Paul's conversion. In that case, they must be associated with Judaism, with the Baptism of John, with the Passover and the Paschal sacrifice, rather than with the mystery rites of oriental religions.

It has next to be noticed that Paul's references to Gnostic ideas are chiefly to be found in his later Epistles. This at least suggests that the ideas (as distinct from the institutions) of the mystery religions, only obtruded themselves on his notice in the last years of his life, and then only because they had crept into Christian churches. He never alludes to mystery religions as rivals to Christianity, though he recognizes the rivalry of Judaism, of Judaic Christianity, of Greek philosophy, of *gnosis,* falsely so called. In *Acts* Paul comes across magicians and false prophets. He visits the headquarters of the Adonis cult; but he never seems to realize the importance of the mystery religions. He evidently

distinguishes between the educated and philosophic idolatry of Athens, and the crude ideas of illiterate peasants; but he shows no knowledge of religions which promised 'happiness in this world and salvation in the next, to all who by initiation into their sacraments joined in the risen life of a redeemer god.'

Kennedy: *St. Paul and the Mystery Religions* (1913) and the same author's article on 'Mysteries' (Christian) in H.Enc.R.E. are illuminating. See also Gardner: *The Religious Experience of St. Paul* (1911). Loisy's monumental work: *Les mystères païens, et le mystère chrétien'* (1914) should be read by all who wish to study this subject fully.

Most of the critics—*e.g.*, Baur, B. Weiss, Lightfoot, Plummer, etc.—date both the Corinthian letters in A.D. 57 or 58; but a fair case can be made out for A.D. 51 or 52 (McGiffert), for A.D. 53 (Harnack), for A.D. 54 (Bacon), for A.D. 56 or 57 (Sabatier and Zahn). Such attempts as have been made to throw doubt on the Pauline authorship of *I. Corinthians* may be disregarded. It seems to have been well known to Clement of Rome in the first century, and also to Ignatius and Polycarp. The internal evidence in favour of the Pauline authorship is even stronger than the external. Attempts to reconstruct the Pauline correspondence with Corinth are largely hypothetical. It is hardly questionable that the first letter is now lost; but as regards the third, there are still wide differences of opinion. The balance of authority favours the view that *II. Corinthians* x.-xiii. was originally part of this third letter (Hausrath, Kennedy, Rendall, Weiss, Schmiedel, McGiffert, Moffatt, Clemen, Peake, Plummer, von Soden, and many others). On the other hand, Holtzmann, Jülicher, Sanday, and others, hold that the third letter, like the first, has completely disappeared.

I. Corinthians has always specially attracted men who are less interested in critical than in historical and modern problems. The lectures of Dean Stanley and of Frederick Robertson illustrate this.

From among the many excellent Commentaries on *I. Corinthians,* I select: Robertson and Plummer (I.C.C. 1911); Findlay (Ex.G.T. 1900); and Godet (1887). Schmiedel may be added, for those who read German.

CHAPTER IV

THE CORINTHIAN CORRESPONDENCE—II

The Letter or Letters known to us as the Second Epistle to the Corinthians. (A.D. 54 or 55)

It will be remembered that Paul wrote four or five letters to the Corinthians, of which (1) is now lost; (2) is what we call the First Epistle; (3) is lost, unless a part of it has survived in *II. Corinthians* x.-xiii.; (4) is contained in *II. Corinthians* i.-viii.; and (5) probably contained the fragment *II. Corinthians* x.-xiii.

It is with (3) that we are first concerned. We gather that it was written in much anguish of spirit and with many tears, consequent on the misconduct of an unnamed individual whom the Corinthians had upheld against Paul (*II. Cor.* ii. 2-4, and vii. 12). In these circumstances the Apostle declined to visit Corinth again. The letter seems to have had the desired effect; at any rate, the offender was condemned by the majority of the Corinthian Church. What his crime had been we do not know. Apparently it was a personal offence directed against the Apostle himself, and it took place on the occasion of a visit paid by Paul to Corinth. From scattered hints we gather that the offender had publicly insulted the Apostle, charging him with hypocrisy and with making illicit gains. We need not suppose that the Corinthians ever assented to these charges; but the parties that had claimed to be of Apollos, of Cephas, and of Christ, may have been not unwilling to profess neutrality. Freedom of speech, often deteriorating into licence, was congenial to Greeks; and it may well be that the offender was one of the few wealthy and influential among the Christians. We can imagine how Paul

would have regarded such neutrality, how he would have withdrawn from Corinth and refused to revisit it, until justice had been done to him. When, however, he learned that his agonized letter had produced the desired effect, he advises that the offender should be forgiven and comforted (*II. Cor.* ii. 5-11).

II. Corinthians

Chapter I.—Paul refers to a great affliction through which he had recently passed. It had evidently been a very serious matter, and he writes as one recently delivered from a dreadful death. He affirms his absolute sincerity, in a way that suggests that insincerity had been one of the accusations brought against him. Similarly we gather that he has been charged with fickleness, and with that sort of duplicity which answers 'yea' and 'nay' to the same question at different times. Therefore it was that he refused to visit Corinth, and had written the letter of anguish and tears.

Chapter II.—But, since then, he has received the good news that the Corinthians have inflicted correction on the offender. Thus sorrow has been turned into joy. He is ready to forgive the offender, but he cannot refrain from once again affirming his own sincerity.

Chapter III.—Paul needs no letter of Commendation to the Corinthians. The Church of Corinth is itself his letter of Commendation, 'written not with ink but with the Spirit of the Living God, not in tables of stone, but in tables that are hearts of flesh.' This leads him to contrast the glory of the old transitory law which so dazzled the people of Israel that they could not look stedfastly on the face of Moses, with the greater glory of the new and spiritual law which will abide. Moses had to veil his face, and that veil has ever since partly concealed the glory of the Old Revelation. But now 'the veil is taken away,' and we discover that 'where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.' Much of the

Epistle is obscured to modern readers by the frequent and sometimes ironical references to the charges brought against Paul by his adversaries. Thus, when he speaks of not needing a letter of commendation, there is probably an allusion to the fact that some of his opponents had brought with them such an introduction.

CHAPTER IV.—Similarly, there seems to be in verse two a reference to some of the charges brought against him. 'We have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the Word of God deceitfully.' And again: 'If our Gospel is veiled, it is veiled in them that are perishing'—*i.e.*, its obscurities are the outcome of the misrepresentations of my adversaries. And again: 'We preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.' Much that looks like self-glorification is a necessary reply to the attacks that have been made upon him. He has to prove his Apostleship by showing that his life has corresponded with the Gospel message, and that he has endured much in order to preach that message. He is ready if need be to die for his converts, so that 'Death worketh in us, but Life in you . . . but though our outward man is decaying, our inward man is renewed day by day . . . while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.'

CHAPTER V.—The mention of the dangers which threatened Paul's very life leads to a digression concerning his attitude towards Death. He yearns for a spiritual body, and yet does not desire to die. He does not want to be 'unclothed'—*i.e.*, stripped of his body, but rather that what is mortal in him may be swallowed up in what is immortal. He is ready to die or to live on, but he alternates as to his choice between Life and Death. Evidently he is less confident than he was when he wrote the earlier Epistles that he will be among those who will still be living when his Master returns. He acquiesces in this doubt, confident that the principles of Christ's Judgment cannot depend on such an accident

as whether we are living or dead. 'For we must all' (the living and the dead) 'be made manifest'—*i.e.*, appear without disguise—'before the Judgment-seat of Christ.'

It is with this knowledge, with this sense of the imminence of death and judgment, with this 'fear of the Lord' in his mind, that he writes what might otherwise seem to be a self-glorification. God knows, and the Corinthians know in their hearts, what manner of man he is. If he praises himself it is only to give them material for glorifying their Apostle, especially against certain people 'that glory in appearance and not in heart.' He again turns to his opponents. They had made claims which seemed to Paul to be purely external. Thus some Judaisers claimed to have had personal intercourse with Jesus, or to be members of the Mother Church, disciples of Peter and John. Against such, let Paul's converts put forward moral considerations. He has told them of his labours and dangers, partly in order to supply them with arguments against his assailants, some of whom, we now gather, had accused him of being mad. To this he replies: 'Whether we are beside ourselves, it is unto God, or whether we are of sober mind, it is unto you.' The charge of insanity would be based, no doubt, upon his speaking with tongues, his ecstacies, his visions, and whatever else could be twisted into a sort of madness. Paul answers, in effect: My ecstacies and visions are matters between myself and God. My hard, practical work is what matters to you, the evidence that I am 'of a sober mind.' Paul was not ashamed of ecstacies and visions, but he always thought far more of the Christian virtues than of those things to which many people confine the word 'spiritual.' Therefore he here insists that the fundamental fact is that Christ died, in order 'that they which live should no longer live unto themselves.' Of course, Paul believed that he had actually seen the Lord Jesus, but he declines to lay stress upon this, as against those who claimed that *they* had, and that *he* had not had such

personal intercourse. 'Even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know Him so no more.'

Paul always showed what seems to us amazingly little interest in the earthly life of Jesus before the Last Supper. Even the Crucifixion and Resurrection appear to impress him rather as spiritual facts than as historical events. He thinks of the Lamb slain since the beginning of the world, rather than of what happened in A.D. 29 or thereabouts; of the Death unto Sin and the Resurrection unto Righteousness, rather than of the capital punishment inflicted upon a Jewish peasant, or the Tomb found empty two days later. That he, Paul, had a Living Lord, a spiritual force at work in his heart, was to him the primary fact, and so here he actually puts away from him all knowledge of Christ 'after the flesh,' preferring to insist that 'if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature,' that 'God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself,' and that He has 'committed unto us the word of reconciliation. We are ambassadors, therefore, on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating you by us: 'We beseech you on behalf of Christ; be ye reconciled to God.' This conviction that it is God Who is reconciling the world to Himself, and that Christians are His ambassadors, pleading 'Be ye reconciled,' is then eloquently expanded. There must be no delay on our part, since '*Now* is the day of salvation.' We must live 'as ministers of God, in pureness, in long-suffering, in kindness, in the Holy Spirit,* in love unfeigned.' It is not necessary to give the whole catalogue of Christian virtues and Christian endurances from this familiar chapter. Our quotations will have sufficed to indicate what Paul regards as the response of Faith, called forth in us by God's message of reconciliation.

CHAPTER VII.—After a brief reminder of what he has

* So in margin of R.V. and in the text of American R.V. The use of the more technical 'Holy Ghost' obscures the fact that it is the Spirit *in us* that is here spoken of.

endured, Paul appeals to Corinthian magnanimity. He is evidently deeply moved: 'Our mouth is opened unto you, O Corinthians, our heart is enlarged. Be ye also enlarged.' He calls on his hearers to separate themselves from unbelievers and to cleanse themselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit.

After this general appeal he returns to the charges brought against himself, taking his stand now upon his appeal for magnanimity. 'Open your hearts to us; we wronged no man; we corrupted no man; we took advantage of no man.' Apparently the Corinthians had been at one time more or less under the influence of Paul's assailants. But he will not blame them for this, partly because he so loves them, but chiefly because he has heard of their splendid return to loyalty: 'Great is my glorying on your behalf. I am filled with comfort; I overflow with joy.' The news was brought to him at a time when things had seemed to be going very badly. 'Our flesh had no relief, but we were afflicted on every side. Without were fightings, within were fears.' Then Titus arrived. 'He told us your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me.' For a moment Paul had regretted that he had ever sent his previous letter—the letter written in tears and anguish—but he soon saw that it was this letter which had wrought the desired result, and that it had produced in its recipients a 'godly sorrow,' which had worked 'repentance unto salvation, a repentance which bringeth no regret.' His bitter letter had not been written on account 'of him that did the wrong' nor 'for his cause that suffered wrong,' but in order that the real feeling of the Corinthians for Paul might be made clear to them. As for Titus, his affection for the Corinthians was most abundantly displayed when he recalled 'how with fear and trembling ye received him.'

Chapter VIII.—A painful incident was thus happily closed. It is evident that Paul, though he speaks in the third person, was himself the victim of the malice 'of him that did the wrong.' But we are given no par-

ticulars. The Apostle hastens to give the Corinthians an opportunity to seal their reconciliation by co-operating in a work of charity. The poor churches of Macedonia have contributed liberally for the relief of the saints—*i.e.*, those of the Mother Church at Jerusalem. Let the Corinthians act in like manner. They must regard this not as a command, but as an offered opportunity of proving their sincerity. Jesus, 'though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor.' Follow His example, and complete the good work of contributing which you began a year ago. You are comparatively wealthy. There ought to be among the churches a desire for some equalization of wealth. The verses 13-15 are rather obscure. They seem to indicate that Paul did not share in the communistic ideas which animated the early disciples in the first days of the Church. He did not wish the Corinthians to reduce themselves to poverty for the sake of the saints, but only to promote some sort of equalization. As for the practical question how the money is to be sent, Titus is willing to undertake this, together with two other persons who are not named. One is 'the brother whose praise in the Gospel is spread through all the churches.' The other is a brother 'whom we have many times proved earnest in many things.' We cannot identify either of these messengers. They were associated with Titus so as to prevent any suspicion from falling on the latter. Let the Corinthians by their liberality prove their love, and justify all that Paul had boasted about them.

Chapter IX. deals chiefly with the spirit in which the subscribing is to be done, and more generally with the Christian principles of charitable expenditure. Much of it has passed into household words, familiar to us all. Parts of it are embodied in the sentences read aloud in connection with the collecting of alms, in the Anglican Eucharist. Other parts of it are no less noteworthy, but the reader must be referred for them to the Epistle itself, which almost certainly closes with this chapter. We

cannot otherwise account for the sudden change of tone from joy, affection, and praise to self-defence and serious reproaches. It is hardly conceivable that Paul suddenly decided to reopen the healed wounds of the old misunderstandings, and to bring fresh charges against his beloved Corinthians.

Disputed Chapters: II. Corinthians x. to xiii.

We have already mentioned that this passage presents us with a difficult problem. The fact of its inclusion in the Epistle as it has come down to us, is a strong *a priori* reason for accepting it as a continuation of chapters i. to ix.; and many ingenious attempts have been made to prove that it may possibly be so. But it remains most improbable that the Apostle, after dealing in the way he has done with the painful quarrel between himself and the Corinthians, should launch out into denunciations. The great controversy is over. The Corinthians have rallied round the absent Apostle and have censured his assailant. The news of this has filled Paul with joy. He has forgiven them fully, and has laid on them the duty, or rather given them the opportunity, of joining him in an act of organized charity. Was he likely after this to open up other grounds of controversy, to defend himself elaborately from other charges, and to attack other opponents? Such matters would more appropriately be dealt with in a separate communication, but if they were so urgent that they must be included in the same Epistle, their place would surely not be at its close. The joyful reconciliation and the proposed co-operation seem the natural ending, not to be lightly spoiled by the recriminations of chapters x. to xiii. But the fragment would be equally out of place in the lost letter of tears and anguish. We know what was the main subject of the latter. It may, of course, have included other matters, but the introduction of these would weaken the force of the Apostle's fundamental grievances. Moreover, the

passage (*II. Cor.* x. to xiii.) gives little evidence of the pain and grief in which that letter was written. On the whole then, it seems best to treat the fragment separately, admitting the possibility of its belonging either to the *Second Epistle* or to the lost letter, but regarding it as more probably part of a fifth letter, which we are unable to date.

CHAPTER X.—Someone has apparently declared that Paul is meek when at Corinth, but autocratic from a distance. He threatens to show himself autocratic when he next comes among them, and to use spiritual weapons, bringing destruction to the disobedient. Let the critics who claim to be Christ's realize that Paul is also Christ's to at least the same extent, and that when he reaches Corinth he will speak not less strongly than he writes, though his bodily presence be weak and his speech lacking in eloquence.

CHAPTER XI.—He has rivals, but they have no such claims as his on the Corinthians. They may be more eloquent, but they have not more knowledge of the truth. If he has refused to accept a salary, this was from no sense of unworthiness. His critics are false Apostles, and it is necessary for him to boast, since the Corinthians are foolish enough to take his rivals at their own valuation and to let them have dominion and act violently. So he proceeds to meet boast with boast. If they are Hebrews, so is he. If they work and suffer for Christ, he works and suffers more, as he proves by enumerating his works and his sufferings.

CHAPTER XII.—He refers to the strange visions he has had. Then he half apologizes for all his boasting, but declares that he was driven to this line of defence, and reminds them that under his rule the Corinthians reached the level of an Apostolic Church in all respects, save that they did not provide their Apostle with a salary.

These chapters raise the question: Who were these False Apostles who were trying to undermine Paul's authority, sneering at his bodily presence and his lack

of eloquence, at his gratuitous work and his lack of spirituality. Paul accuses them of making slaves of their converts; of deceiving and smiting them; of preaching another Jesus, another Spirit, another Gospel; and of being ministers of Satan. They appear to have been travelling teachers who had brought letters of commendation to Corinth, and called themselves Apostles. Most of the charges they brought against Paul, and most of Paul's replies, have no doctrinal significance. To some extent the rivalry was personal, but there was evidently a real doctrinal difference, summed up in the assertion that they were teaching another Jesus, another Spirit, and another Gospel. If we attempt to identify these men with any of the four parties referred to in the *First Epistle,* it must be, I think, the party 'of Christ.' There is no evidence that they were Judaisers, and therefore of the so-called Cephas party. The Apollos party cannot have fundamentally differed from the Pauline, as Apollos was apparently developing Paulinism along the lines of Alexandrian philosophy. But if the party of Christ was laying stress on the biography of Jesus—that aspect of Christianity which was soon to find noble expression in the Gospels—it seems natural to connect the false Apostles with them. Paul's Christology was plainly transcendental. Of 'Jesus after the flesh,' of the thirty years preceding the Last Supper, Paul seems to know little and to care little. To him Jesus is the Living Lord, almost identified with the Divine Spirit in man, except that He was crucified, rose again, and will one day return to the earth. If the false Apostles attacked this presentation of the case, and laid stress upon the Nativity, the Baptism, the Miracles, the Parables, and the ethics of the Sermon on the Mount, they may well have asserted that Paul was giving a false idea of Jesus and of the Gospel, and ignoring the part played by the Holy Spirit in His Baptism. Paul might retort that, by disparaging the transcendental and immanent Christ, they were preaching another Jesus, another

Spirit, and another Gospel. On this assumption the two parties had laid hold of two opposite sides of Catholic Christianity, and were belabouring one another through misunderstanding. Paul's opponents might justly be called 'false' Apostles, since they were uprooting true ideas, interfering with another man's jurisdiction, and bringing unfounded personal charges against him, apparently even insinuating that he had dishonestly appropriated part of the collection made for the saints; for the natural explanation of the obscure passages in xii. 16 and 17 is that the opponents of Paul are saying: 'If he did not draw a salary he cunningly took advantage of you, through the agents whom he sent to collect money.' This and other insinuations explain and perhaps justify Paul's indignation, though it is likely enough that he under-estimated the value of those portions of the truth that did not specially appeal to his own mind. The fragment of the Epistle concludes with a solemn declaration of the discipline which he means to apply to the Corinthian Church when he visits it for the third time. Paul was an ardent theologian, yet from many parts of his writing we see that his main concern is with Righteousness. It is moral offences that chiefly necessitate his discipline (xii. 20 to xiii. 2). The Presence of Christ in him will be his justification, and the Presence of Christ in them will be their test. The one end he has in view is their moral and spiritual perfection.

A few words may here be introduced about the extraordinary vision related in the twelfth chapter. The statement is that fourteen years previously a certain person, presumably Paul himself, was carried either bodily or apart from the body, up to the Third Heaven or Paradise, and there heard unspeakable words; and, that he might not be exalted overmuch, 'there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me. . . . Concerning this thing, I besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from me. And He hath said unto me, "My grace is sufficient for thee."'

Among the noticeable things about this vision are (1) that Paul seems to have kept silence about it for fourteen years. He only mentions it now because it is necessary to vindicate his claims against the false Apostles, and he begins to tell the story in the third person, as if shrinking from making public so intimate an experience. (2) In his eagerness to be accurate he admits ignorance of what actually happened to his body. He can only say that he, his conscious self, was in a strange place and heard mystic words. The idea of Seven Heavens was Babylonian, but had been more or less adopted by various Jewish Apocalypts, who give detailed accounts of the Third Heaven—*e.g.*, *Secrets of Enoch,* viii. to x. (3) We have no hint as to the nature of the unspeakable words, and no attempt to describe the scene. Paul is evidently unwilling to say more about the vision than is necessary for his purpose. He wishes to rest his claims upon his character and his teaching, not upon visions or the like. (4) A physical infirmity followed the vision, apparently as a check upon spiritual pride. It came as a sudden pain, which he compares to a thorn in the flesh, a blow from Satan. (5) The pain was either permanent or recurrent. He formerly prayed to be delivered from it, but has now learned that 'power is made perfect in weakness.' Sweet are the uses of adversity. (6) Of the various suggested explanations of Paul's 'thorn in the flesh,' the most reasonable seems to be that he suffered from epileptic attacks, such as are said to have afflicted other great men, as, for instance, Julius Cæsar, Napoleon, and King Alfred. 'Genius,' says Lombroso, 'is a symptom of hereditary degeneration of the epileptoid variety.' Another theory is that Paul suffered from ophthalmia, induced by the glare of light which blinded him at his conversion. The disease may have been aggravated by his subsequent sojourn in the desert. This would give added meaning to his assertion that the Galations would have given their *eyes* for him, and would explain why he wrote so little of his own Epistles, why he failed to recognize the High Priest, and

habitually seemed to need disciples to minister to him. The two theories are not mutually exclusive. The shock and the consequent ophthalmia might have caused disturbances, resulting in epileptic fits.

A few general remarks on the whole Corinthian correspondence may be here introduced.

Of all Paul's works *I. Corinthians* is, perhaps, the most interesting; at any rate, it possesses the greatest variety of interest. No other Epistle throws so much light on the condition of any of the early Christian churches, and especially on the nature of the difficulties that they had to settle. The prominence of such problems in this Epistle may be partly accounted for by the size and importance of Corinth, with its vast commerce, its literary and artistic eminence, its Greek subtlety and mental activity. In Corinth the contrast between rich and poor, the temptation to go to law before Gentile tribunals, the prevalent licentiousness, and the lax morality, would raise special difficulties. Greek party spirit, love of argument, and dislike of authority, would all tend to raise questions which might have slumbered in a more Oriental atmosphere. Then there was the question of women's rights, of sexual morality, of the exaltation of individual preachers, of contact with idolatrous meats, of disorders connected with the 'tongues.' We see at once that Corinth was, of all the churches yet founded, the one in which such problems were most likely to become pressing. Paul's difficulty in dealing with them was partly due to a dislike of exercising his authority unnecessarily, combined with a stern resolve to use it unwaveringly, if the morality, piety, and order of the young church could only thus be maintained. He must have known that Hellenes were impatient of all authority excepting that of argument. He had, therefore, a very hard task. He was compelled to deal with a whole series of problems, many of them perhaps, new to him. His Corinthians had definitely asked for his guidance, but it was by no means certain that they would therefore acquiesce in his

decision. He saw that it would not be enough for him to express opinions or pass judgments. He must if possible give reasons that would satisfy active and subtle brains. He must compromise when there was right on both sides, but yet he must reject any kind of compromise where Gospel truth and the principles of righteousness were involved; and he must constantly hold up before them the Cross, which might seem foolishness to Greeks, but which was to Paul not merely the central fact in the world's history, but also the great revelation of the Character of God. An Epistle written in such circumstances could not possess the unity of a philosophic treatise or an exposition of theology. Its subjects were practically prescribed to Paul by the letter from Corinth, and by knowledge otherwise obtained of the state of things in that vigorous but disorderly church. Such artistic unity as the *First Epistle* possesses is given to it by the constant recurrence to first principles, and especially by the way Love is made the key to all difficulties. The self-will of the converts was to be controlled by the thought that everything proceeded from the Love of God, and that all difficulties had to be viewed in the light of the law of mutual love among men. Intellectual pride must be restrained by the conviction that while knowledge puffs up, love builds, and builds for eternity. The Resurrection of Christ must be connected with the thought of the resurrection of humanity, and with the Divine Purpose of being everything in every man.

The *Second Epistle* has not the same variety of interest as the *First,* but it illustrates even better the personality of Paul, his hopefulness and tenderness, his controversial energy, his self-assertion with its underlying meekness. He identifies himself sometimes with his disciples, sometimes with his Master. Yet he never lets slip his sense either of authority over the former or of nothingness in the Presence of the Latter. He was a man born to rule, but born also to serve.

II. Corinthians is also important as the first tolerably

complete exposition of the Pauline doctrine of the Atonement. The assertion 'God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself,' is a summary of that doctrine, expressed in seven Greek words. It begins and ends with God, Who is the Originator of that Reconciliation, and the End to which it is a means; and He was in Christ from first to last. The practical deduction which Paul draws from the Atonement is: 'Let everyone that nameth the Name of Christ depart from iniquity.' What he means by iniquity he has indicated in his list of the works of the flesh, even as what he means by righteousness appears from his list of the fruits of the spirit. His habit of making such lists may be attributed to a fear lest his hearers should take such words as righteousness and sin as vague technical theological terms, rather than as involving all the separate virtues and defects of character and will. This is more fully worked out in later Epistles.

The particular controversies that rent the Corinthian Church have for the most part ceased to have much practical importance, but the ways in which they were envisaged by the Apostle remain abiding principles, which have to be applied, as far as men can apply them, to the problems of all ages.

NOTE ON CHAPTER IV

We have no evidence that *I. Corinthians* was known to any of the Fathers till well into the second century. Their silence does not prove that they did not know of it, but we should certainly have expected Clement of Rome, in writing to the Corinthian Church, to have referred to the Second as well as to the First Epistle, if he had been familiar with it. The weakness of the external evidence is, however, outweighed by the strength of the internal, and modern critics almost unanimously believe in the Pauline authorship of *II. Corinthians*. It is, however, almost certainly a composite work. Apart from Chaps. x.-xiii. (spoken of in my third chapter and note), there are passages which look like

interpolations. Thus we have seen that the passage vi. 14 to vii. 1, though Pauline in spirit, seems neither to follow naturally on vi. 13, nor to lead up naturally to vii, 2. On the other hand, if this passage is excluded, the sequence from vi. 13 to vii. 2 is natural enough. Among the critics who regard this as either an interpolation or a case of some misarrangement of MSS. are: Schrader, Ewald, Hilgenfeld, Franke, Davidson, Sabatier, Hausrath, and Clemen. Commentaries: Bernard (Ex.G.T. 1903); Carpenter (C.R.V. 1909); Menzies (1912); Plummer (I.C.C. 1915).

CHAPTER V

THE SECOND GROUP OF PAULINE EPISTLES—I

Galatians. (A.D. 55 or 56)

We have seen that the *First Epistle to the Corinthians* was written from Ephesus, where Paul is said to have remained for three years. In reality it was only for two years and a quarter, but the Jews in such cases habitually reckoned fractions as units. Thus the day and a half that elapsed between the Crucifixion and the Resurrection are spoken of as three days, because they included part of Friday and Sunday as well as the whole of Saturday. But even with this correction Paul's stay with the Ephesians was for him an unusually long one.

Ephesus was a great centre of idolatry. Its temple of Diana was regarded as one of the wonders of the world. Some idea of its magnificence may be gathered from the fragments preserved in the British Museum. A great trade in images of the goddess was carried on in the city. These images, usually made of silver, stone, marble, or terra-cotta, were purchased in order to be dedicated in the temple or to be carried home as memorials of their visit, by the innumerable pilgrims who flocked to Ephesus. The manipulation of shrines and images provided a means of livelihood for many of the Ephesians, and the preaching of Paul, which naturally interfered with this business, caused them serious alarm. At length a maker of silver shrines called a meeting of his guild to denounce the double danger—the attack on the sacred worship of Diana and the peril to their own industry. He aroused a storm of indignation. Crowds rushed through the streets. Some of them seized two of

the Apostle's companions and carried them away to the great theatre. In the scene that followed we have to distinguish four parties. There were the Roman rulers, responsible for the maintenance of order; there were the infuriated citizens, some directly interested in the threatened trade, others jealous for the fame of their temple and, indirectly, of their city. There were the accused Christians, and lastly there were the Jews, who, being themselves opponents of idolatry, were in danger of being included in an attack primarily directed against Christians. One of these Jews endeavoured to make a speech which should clear his compatriots of any complicity in the proceedings of the new sect, but the mob was not disposed to draw distinctions. Jews were generally unpopular, and likely to be especially so in the great headquarters of idolatrous worship. For two whole hours shouts in honour of Diana interrupted the proceedings, till at last the town clerk, an official representing the rulers of the city, managed to obtain a hearing, and proclaimed that the position of the goddess was impregnable in Ephesus. He added that the two accused men were apparently not guilty of either treason or irreligion, but that any charge against them must be brought before the law courts, while other disputes could be settled by the ordinary city assembly. The present proceedings were illegal and likely to bring punishment upon Ephesus. The meeting was then dissolved, but Paul thought it best to leave the city.

He may have feared lest his continued presence should bring about fresh riots, but apart from this his heart was set on a visit to Rome; and before embarking upon this great enterprise, he wished to bring his various churches into closer relation with Jerusalem. For months, perhaps for years, weekly contributions had been made by the churches which Paul had founded, for the benefit of the poor Christians in Jerusalem. The exceptional poverty of these is easily accounted for. The holy places attracted many indigent persons. Some of these became residents. Others were pilgrims who often

arrived ragged, hungry, and without money. The crowding of the city helped to force up the price of food and lodging. Paul was filled with pity for these poor people, and was probably not sorry for such an opportunity of conciliating Jewish Christians. He may also have thought that personal contact between them and the Gentile converts would be good for both parties. He therefore invited his churches to appoint delegates to join him in bearing contributions to Jerusalem. Galatia sent two, 'Asia' two, Macedonia four. No delegate came from Achaia. Its liberal contribution was carried by Paul himself. In the course of his journey the Apostle sent for the Ephesian presbyters and made a touching valedictory address to them, and to the delegates who were with him. He reviewed his own conduct during the two and a quarter years of his sojourn at Ephesus. He had supported himself and his comrades by his own manual labour. He had showed them his hands—'these hands'—marked, no doubt, by the hard work they had performed. This he had done partly in order that he might preserve his independence, partly in order to set an example. In an age and country where office was generally made a means of self-emolument, it was specially important to set such an example. He goes on to assert that he has held nothing back, but has declared the whole truth as he believed it. He had faced dangers from Jews and others, and he now expected imprisonment and affliction wherever he went. Presumably he would never again see the beloved Church at Ephesus. The spirit constrained him to go to Jerusalem, and then—though this he did not mention—he was bound for Rome.

A coasting vessel carried the delegates to Patara, whence they set sail in a larger boat to Tyre. Here some of the prophets, acting as they believed, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, positively forbade Paul to proceed (*Acts* xxi. 4). This may well have helped him to realize the sort of difficulties which would arise, if individual Christians were to claim that their inspiration

gave them authority. He believed in the genuineness of the ' speaking with tongues ' and other manifestations of prophetic fervour, but he saw that inspiration does not imply infallibility. Perhaps he regarded the prohibition as a mere test of his courage, a mere warning that if he did proceed persecution and ultimately martyrdom awaited him. At any rate, when these men ' said to Paul, through the Spirit, that he should not set foot in Jerusalem,' he showed in the most practical way his conviction that prophets were not infallible. In spite of the inspired prohibition, he proceeded on his way.

This visit to Jerusalem affords a good opportunity for glancing back at the work of the Apostle, and considering its measure of success. He had now established Christian churches along all but the African coasts of the Eastern Mediterranean, as well as in many inland regions. The civilized parts of Asia Minor were ready to receive the Gospel. There was a widespread sense of need, of the failure of the old religion, and of the new philosophies. The educated heathen including the priests, despised the mythologies in which they professed to believe, and, as a natural consequence, idolatry had become more than ever debased. Imposture, superstition, and licentiousness were interwoven with idolatry, and men were looking in vain for an alternative. Stoicism provided a lofty creed, congenial to a few choice spirits, but far beyond the grasp of the multitude, who were much more attracted by sorceries and mystic Oriental cults. At Philippi, Paphos, and Ephesus we find Christianity confronted with Magic, and these cases were probably only a small portion of those that occurred. The attitude of the Roman Government remained still on the whole neutral, in spite of occasional persecutions in the interests of order. But the growing tendency to deify emperors was soon to change the whole situation. Paul was distinctly on the side of the government, despite its paganism and idolatry; but if he had survived the Neronic persecution it is at least probable that his attitude would have changed, and that he would have

come to regard the Roman Empire as the great enemy of the Faith, and emperor-worship as the worship of the beast.

For the present, however, Paul still had most to fear from the hostility of his fellow-countrymen. This subject is full of obscurity. If we have correctly described the decision of the Council of Jerusalem as a triumph for the liberal policy of Paul, we must assume that there followed a reactionary movement. The conviction of even converted Jews that they and they only were the chosen people, was too deeply rooted to be overcome even by the decision of their own ecclesiastical authorities. Moreover, the Jerusalem decision applied to Gentiles only. It was still open to a Jewish Christian to claim special privileges for his race, and so to reopen the whole controversy in a slightly modified form. He might also argue that the Jerusalem Council had only laid down a minimum, and that the highest form of Christianity involved a submission to the Mosaic ordinances.

When Paul wrote his *Epistle to the Galatians* he had already twice visited their churches. On his first visit he had received an enthusiastic welcome, and great fervour had been aroused (*Gal.* iii. 1-5, iv. 14-16, v. 7). But when the Apostle came a second time he found that the Galatians had fallen away from their first ardour. He attributes this to discord and to incipient legalism. His plain speaking offended many of his hearers, but his work appears to have been moderately successful. After his departure, however, there arrived certain Judaising teachers, who insisted upon the necessity of obeying the law (iii. 6, 9, and 16), and declared that Paul's Gospel needed to be supplemented by ritualism and by circumcision. They also depreciated Paul's authority as delegated. Some of the Galatians had accordingly been circumcised.

The case of the Judaisers had considerable plausibility. Christians recognized the Old Testament as Scripture, and as almost, if not quite, infallible. Why, then,

should they not obey its plainly expressed precepts? Jesus Himself had been circumcised and had obeyed the law; so had His original Apostles. Who was this Paul, that he should persuade the Galatians to fly in the face of such examples? He was himself circumcised, and he kept the law when it suited his purpose to do so. But the Apostle had grasped the fact that a successful attempt to enforce the Mosaic Law among Christians universally, would mean that Christianity would never become the religion of the Gentiles. Moreover, if the Law of God revealed in Christ Jesus was the one thing needful, then the Judaic system could not be really essential. And so, on hearing that Galatians were being circumcised, Paul at once dictated that great plea for Christian liberty which we now know as the *Epistle to the Galatians*.

The intense feeling under which he writes is shown by the omission of any such thanksgiving as he generally introduces after his salutation. In the course of his journeyings he has suddenly been informed that something like a revolution was taking place in the temper and practice of his Galatian churches. Accordingly he plunges at once into a defence of his own authority as an Apostle, not through men, but through Jesus Christ and through God the Father. He marvels that the Galatians are so quickly moving away from their converter to his opponents (*Gal.* i. 6 and 7). He would wish himself accursed if *he* could so change, or so lay himself out to please men (i. 8-10). But the Gospel that he taught came to him through the Revelation of Jesus Christ (i. 11, 12). They knew that he, Paul, was once a zealous Jew and a persecutor of Christians, but God 'separated me from my mother's womb, and called me through His Grace to reveal His Son in me'; and, being converted, 'I conferred not with flesh and blood, neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were Apostles before me; but I went away into Arabia and again I returned unto Damascus.' It was not until three years later that he went to Jerusalem, and then, of the Apostles, he saw only Peter and James. Fourteen years later he again

visited Jerusalem, but again he would not yield his independence—'no, not for an hour.' And the three leaders of the Jerusalem Church recognized that he was the Apostle of the Gentiles, even as they were Apostles of the Circumcised. 'But when Peter came to Antioch I resisted him to the face,' because he separated himself from the Gentiles and led away other Jewish Christians, including Barnabas himself (ii. 11-13).

Paul then tells the Galatians what he said to Peter (ii. 15-17). This he expands into a full statement of the antithesis between law and Gospel. The true sons of Abraham are not those who obey the law, but those who believe in Jesus. This he tries to prove by highly Rabbinical arguments, not very convincing to us (iii. 8-29, and iv. 22-31); but interspersed with this dialectic, we have a number of eloquent and passionate phrases in which Paul is at his best. His moral and spiritual enthusiasm keeps bubbling up. His faith in Christ Jesus transfigures what would otherwise be arid argumentation. He appeals to the hearts of the Galatians to bear witness, whether it is by the law or by the Gospel, that they have been raised from Spiritual Death to Spiritual Life, whereby they can address God as their Father.

Most of the Galatians had never been Jews, but as Christians they would have been instructed in the Old Testament, which was as yet the sole Scripture acknowledged in the Churches. The Judaisers would avail themselves of this fact in urging obedience to the Mosaic Law. As Pagans, the Galatians had probably regarded religion as essentially a matter of rules. They were now being offered Jewish rules instead of the purely spiritual religion of Paul, which would seem to many Pagans hardly a religion at all. But to the Apostle this craving for rules seemed a turning back to 'weak and beggarly rudiments' (iv. 9).

A third element runs through this involved and passionate passage—viz., the historical facts of Paul's connection with the Galatians. Before he came to them

they were heathen. He brought them freedom (iv. 9-11). How can they turn back to the bondage of regulations? He here treats Judaism as a sort of heathendom, with the substitution of one set of regulations, the Mosaic, for the other set, the Pagan. They had begun well, in the Christian way. Those who are undermining his work bear a heavy responsibility (v. 10-12). 'I would that they which unsettle you would even cut themselves off. For ye brethren were called to freedom. Only use not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh, but through love be servants one to another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' The *Epistle to the Galatians* has been called a glorification of Faith, but Paul seldom stops short at mere Faith. What he glorifies is 'Faith, working through Love' (v. 6).

The Apostle's attitude towards circumcision was, perhaps, hardly logical. Rules and ritual are not necessarily bad, even though they be not essentials. But Paul felt that the non-essentials might strangle the essentials, and that the Galatians could not maintain their spiritual life if they put themselves under the yoke of Old Testament legalism. That he was in the right is evidenced by the utter collapse of Jewish Christianity. Within twenty years the Church of the circumcised had crumbled away, or at best was dragging on a miserable existence without vitality. If Jewish Christianity could not survive among men who had inherited the glorious traditions of Jewry and had grown up to love its rules and its ritual, what chance would it have had among Gentiles with Greek or Oriental traditions and modes of thought?

The *Epistle to the Galatians* differs from Paul's previous letters in its greater concentration on the essence of the author's theology. In each of the four earlier Epistles a large number of very widely differing subjects are treated, and doctrinal theology only enters at intervals to illustrate the various points that are raised. In the *Epistle to the Galatians*, on the contrary, there is

only one subject—the spiritual crisis in the Churches, the urgency of a definite decision between the simple Gospel of God and the complicated teaching of men. Hitherto it had sufficed to say that in Christ Jesus circumcision and uncircumcision do not matter. Now the Apostle boldly proclaims: 'If ye receive circumcision, Christ will profit you nothing' (v. 2). There is to be no more compromise. The Galatians must definitely choose between the promise and the law, between the flesh and the spirit. Hitherto there had been compromises. Paul himself had circumcised Timothy, but he had apparently refused to allow Titus to be subjected to the rite.* Now the refusal of circumcision became to Paul a matter of principle. A Gentile who was circumcised practically denied that God had sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts. He was substituting formal rules for spiritual freedom and completely misunderstanding the Old Testament Scriptures. The law had been useful for a time, as the slave (pedagogue) who leads little boys to school is useful. But Christians have attained to spiritual manhood. The slave must be dismissed.

Paul at first rests his case on authority by asserting the independence of his own apostleship, and proving that this independent authority had been recognized by the leaders of the Church in Jerusalem. The Gospel message had been directly revealed to him, not by men or through men. 'It pleased God,' he says, 'to reveal His Son in me.' It was not merely that he had seen a vision of the Crucified as he journeyed towards Damascus. The revelation was something *within him*, set going by the vision, ripened in the Arabian desert, and now amounting to a certainty.

Secondly, he appeals to Scripture—*i.e.*, of course, the Old Testament, since hardly any of the New Testament had been written, and that little had not begun to take

* The words 'Titus was not compelled to be circumcised' *may* mean that though circumcised, it was not under compulsion. The Galatians, knowing the facts, would understand the words.

rank as Scripture. This part of the argument is to a modern reader the least satisfactory. It reminds us of the methods of some later expositors, who surmount Old Testament difficulties by allegorizing. The story of Abraham's two sons is in the original a simple enough story, illustrating some of the dangers which only monogamy can escape. The two women, wife and concubine, are represented by Paul as not women, but covenants, 'one bearing children under bondage, after the flesh,' and therefore corresponding to the Jews under the law; the other corresponding to the Heavenly Jerusalem, because her children are free-born, children of promise. Then, with a quaint inversion of facts, we are told that 'he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the spirit,' and that the Scripture said, 'Cast out the handmaid and her son.' The moral, of course, is that Judaism is to be rejected, and that the Galatians are to cling to their freedom and not 'be entangled again in a yoke of bondage.' Such a method of interpretation has nothing in common with modern criticism, which tries simply to get at the facts. If Paul had wanted to defend the conduct of Abraham he could have shown that the patriarch was the victim of an immoral social system, and found himself in a position where he had to sacrifice either his wife's or his concubine's rights. If he had wanted to defend Christianity he could have shown that its views on sexual morality would, if put into practice, sweep away this kind of dilemma. But Paul had been trained in a system of Scriptural interpretation which too often ignored the human aspects of the Old Testament stories and regarded the latter as allegories. So Ishmael and Isaac become the Old Covenant and the New. The text 'Cast out the handmaid and her son' is actually quoted as 'Scripture,' without regard to the fact that the words are merely spoken by a jealous wife. But it would be unreasonable to blame Paul for following the method of interpretation in which he had been trained. He was a religious genius who burst through many of the trammels of his educa-

tion and environment. But from one of his limitations—namely, a Rabbinical attitude towards the Bible—he never emancipated himself. Notice, however, that his main appeal is not to his own authority as an apostle, or to the authority of the allegorized Old Testament, but to the authority of conscience. 'But I say, walk by the spirit.' It is ultimately because they are led by the spirit, that the Galatians are not under the law. For 'the fruits of the spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, self-control; against such there is no law.' 'Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ' (v. 16 to vi. 2).

We have seen how it was Paul's custom to dictate his Epistles, and then to add a few words in his own handwriting. In this Epistle the postscript contains the phrase, 'See with how large letters I have written unto you with mine own hand.' This is probably a humorous allusion to the unscholarly character of his handwriting. Paul had read much and had studied much. Above all, he had thought much. But he was a manual labourer, and his fingers were presumably so stiff from work that he could only form large childish letters. Perhaps he had at one time written like a scholar. If he had now lost this art by voluntarily undertaking so much manual labour in order that he might not be a burden to his converts, and that he might also help to support his fellow-missionaries, we can understand how the look of his big clumsy writing would strike him. We cannot say whether he has this still in his mind when he goes on to say: 'From henceforth let no man trouble me; for I bear, branded on my body, the marks of Jesus.' At any rate, 'these hands,' stiffened in the service of God and man, were part of his self-sacrifice. His poor body was scarred with wounds and wasted by disease. As a Roman general bared his breast that his mutinous soldiers might see the scars it bore, so this good soldier of Christ, addressing those who had recently been rebellious, points to his wounds, though it is only with the mind's eye that they are to be seen. There may be,

perhaps, an undertone of weariness. He has said his say and now longs for a little rest. 'I bear, branded on my body, the marks of Jesus.' It was not only, nor perhaps chiefly, physical marks, the results of violence, persecution, floggings, stonings, scourgings, and the like. His body was probably weakened and disfigured by his shipwrecks, his 'day and night spent in the deep,' his hunger and thirst, not to mention his mental labours and anxieties, the attacks of adversaries, the fickleness and falling away of converts, and whatever was implied by 'the care of all the churches.' Surely he has suffered enough and may now take a little rest. But this could not be. He had to go on to the very last, drinking of the cup of blood, and being baptized with the baptism of tears. Our sense of his greatness is deepened by the contrast between his poor ailing body and his splendid capacity for work. Occasionally his spirit seemed for a moment to be failing, as when he thrice besought the Lord that his disease might be removed. But he always received the same answer: 'My Grace is sufficient for thee,' and always rushed once more into the fray. How, indeed, could a man of such a temperament hope that from henceforth no man should trouble him? But he had what sufficed—that Grace of God which was sufficient for him.

We must here briefly touch upon the difficult question: Who were these Galatians to whom Paul wrote this Epistle? The original Galatia was a region of Asia Minor, wherein Gauls had settled about three hundred years before the time of the Apostle. Starting from Western Europe, a large body of these adventurous savages had fought their way eastwards and southwards to Greece and had thence crossed over into Asia Minor, taking their wives and children with them. To the number of about twenty thousand they settled down in the north-east of Phrygia, whence they raided the neighbouring country, often by the invitation of some Asiatic ruler who desired their help against his rivals. The limits of their dominion were fixed about the year

B.C. 230, and it is this region that we find generally spoken of as Galatia, during the next two centuries.

But while the name of Galatia was primarily given to this Gallic region, it was afterwards extended southwards so as to include Pisidia and Lycaonia, where Paul had founded the churches of Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. We will call the original Galatia *Northern* Galatia and the added territory *Southern* Galatia. The point so greatly disputed is whether Paul was writing to the latter or only to the former. On the one hand, it is pointed out in *Acts* the name of Galatia is never applied to the southern region. On the other hand, *Acts* contains no account of any evangelization of the *Northern* Galatia. We must therefore suppose that either Paul differed from Luke in the use of the geographical term, or else that the latter ignored the founding of those churches in which, as our Epistle shows, his great leader took so profound an interest. I will not enter into the difficulties that lie in the way of accepting either of the alternative theories. The balance of argument appears to me rather to favour the view that Paul referred to the whole province, and that therefore four churches, the foundation of which is described in the *Acts of the Apostles*, are among those to whom our Epistle is addressed. I cannot, however, follow most of the adherents of this theory in their view that the Galatian preceded the Corinthian letters.

This point is of some importance in connection with the development of Pauline theology. It seems clear that at the time when the Apostle wrote to the Thessalonians, his mind was still dominated by the expectation of a very speedy return of Christ with Apocalyptic surroundings. In the *Epistles to the Corinthians* this belief is still implied, but it holds a less prominent place than in the earlier letters, while in Paul's later Epistles the expectation has almost or quite disappeared. The Coming of Christ is now thought of by him as something altogether spiritual. This change is noticeable in the *Epistle to the Galatians*, which I place after the

Epistle to the Corinthians. On the other hand, it is almost certainly earlier than the *Epistle to the Romans*. The former was written in the stress of the controversy, the latter after the controversy had died away. The balance of evidence seems to date *Corinthians* in A.D. 54, *Galatians* in A.D. 55, and *Romans* in A.D. 56 or 57.

We may next ask whether Paul had really been inconsistent in his attitude towards circumcision. Undoubtedly, in the interests of peace and conciliation, he had done things which could be twisted into admissions of the Jewish claims. The circumcising of Timothy the son of a Gentile father, was an instance of this. Conciliation of the Jews seems to have been his chief motive. But apart from this desire there was probably a real development in Paul's views on the subject, and to the last he seems to have wavered somewhat between the three opinions—that circumcision was a matter of indifference, that it was obligatory for the Jews only, that it must be avoided as implying a denial of the sufficiency of Christ's work. In the Galatian Epistle, he takes, on the whole, the third of these views. He represents Christianity as something purely spiritual. God's Word, working in the hearts of the Galatians, had raised them to a higher elevation, vivifying them with Divine life. Paul addresses the Galatians as 'foolish,' making his appeal to their intellect. If he can persuade them to take his view of their conversion, they will see that any falling away from it is folly. They are actually going back, he tells them, to their Pagan position, and regarding rites and ceremonies as the essence of religion. His appeal is usually to the conscience rather than to the intellect; but not always—not here. The Galatians, like other Asiatic Pagans, had no doubt been familiar with occult religions, which taught that men should advance by way of rites to spirituality. This was analogous to the Pauline idea of Judaism as a preliminary discipline for Christianity; but the new Judaisers were reversing the process and treating Pauline Christianity as a step towards the higher standard. The Galatians were so

'foolish' as to be attracted towards this reversal of the true order. Can they not see, asks Paul, that, having the spirit of Christ, they have a complete way of religious life? Has not its sufficiency been proved? Having begun in the spirit, are they now to be 'perfected by the flesh'?

A few minor points in Paul's argument may next be mentioned. The Greek system of adoption was primarily a method of preventing the extinction of a family by the introduction of a new member, who would maintain the continuity of the family worship. But from the point of view of property it was also a sort of testament or settlement, public and irrevocable (*Gal.* iii. 15), when it had once been confirmed—*i.e.*, duly inscribed in the record office. Paul's order of thought in *Gal.* iii. 6 to 22 is this: An adopted son succeeds both to the possessions and to the religious privileges of his adopting father. In the case of Abraham, Faith is the possession. He who succeeds to the Faith of Abraham must therefore be regarded as the son of Abraham, whether natural or adopted; and therefore the blessing promised to Abraham must also come to the adopted sons. They 'receive the promise of the spirit, through Faith.' This covenant or testament could not be annulled by the law, which came four hundred and thirty years later. The law was given with an ethical purpose, but while it could not annul the testament, it did not succeed in securing righteousness. Paul's argument that the singular form of the word 'seed' proves a reference to Christ is invalidated by the fact that 'seed' in the sense of offspring did not admit of a plural form. The Apostle seems to have been led astray by the common Rabbinical practice of regarding grammatical forms as involving mystical truths. But with all its logical defects, his underlying argument remains valid. The true seed of Abraham is Christ, and all Christians are in Christ. God's promises, therefore, apply to all Christians, whether they are the natural or the adopted sons of Abraham. The law itself implies that all men are sinners, and yet provides salvation only for those who have ceased to sin.

The promised salvation, therefore, must come in some way altogether different from that of the law. This brings us to Paul's doctrine of the Atonement; but instead of at once stating this in the striking form to which we have already referred, he first attempts a Rabbinical argument which leaves the critical modern reader quite unimpressed. 'The law was ordained through angels, by the hand of a Mediator. Now a mediator is not of one, but God is One' (*Gal.* iii. 19-20). Here we have three statements, the first of which was a Rabbinical tradition that seems to have no bearing on the subject. The mediator of the first sentence is presumably Moses, but, if so, he was plainly a mediator between God and man. Here, then, we have two parties required by the assertion that 'a mediator is not of one.' All the ingenuity of commentators has failed to show any relation to the argument of the final clause, 'But God is One.' Apparently the thought in the mind of Paul is that a Mediator (Christ) is necessary for the New Covenant, to act as Moses acted in relation to the Old. But if he means this he does not say it. He leaves it to the imagination of the Galatians. It must be remembered that he was dictating the letter, and perhaps did not read over what he had dictated. He rushes on to preach liberty and equality, and to assert that distinctions of rank, nationality, and sex count for nothing in Christ (*Gal.* iii. 26-30).

Of the climax of this Epistle we have already spoken. It only remains to repeat that we must not lay too much stress on the defects of its logic. It rings down the ages as a Proclamation of the Love of God, of the reconciliation with Him that is offered to sinful man, of the essentially spiritual character of true religion, of the complete freedom offered to believers. This freedom is not freedom to do whatever we like. It is only by serving God and man that we can attain the perfect liberty, which consists in the subordination of all the lower elements of our nature, to that highest element which is Christ in us.

There has been much discussion about apparent discrepancies between *Acts* and *Galatians,* but these only appear, if we assume that both writers were giving a complete account of Paul's proceedings. In reality they were writing for different purposes, and each naturally omitted points which had no connection with the objects he had in view. Paul wrote as a controversialist, and kept closely to the charges brought against him, passing over such facts as did not bear on his arguments. The author of *Acts,* on the other hand, was writing as an historian, with possibly a bias for such facts as indicated the unity of the Church and especially the general harmony between Paul and the earlier Apostles. His information, moreover, was probably imperfect, except where he writes in the first person. In other portions of *Acts,* although his accuracy is remarkable, his knowledge is plainly by no means exhaustive. That Paul knew little of the Gospel story is implied in the words, 'For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ' (*Gal.* i. 12). The meaning of Christianity, and especially of the Crucifixion and the Resurrection, had been directly revealed to his soul. He had naturally gathered a few details of the earlier life and teaching of the Master in his intercourse with other Christians, but he still seems to regard such things as of minor importance.

NOTE ON CHAPTER V

The Pauline authorship of *Galatians* is now practically undisputed, but the controversy as to what region is referred to as 'Galatia' remains unsettled. Schmiedel puts the case for the North Galatian theory with great force in the *Enc. Bib.* The protagonist for the rival view is Ramsay, whose arguments are scattered over a number of his books and articles. Both parties include many eminent critics, moderate and advanced. On the North Galatian side are Jülicher, Chase, Schürer, Wendt, etc. On the South Galatian side we find

Renan, Pfleiderer, Weizsäcker, Hausrath, Zahn, etc. But there are important differences of opinion among the members of each party. The arguments are well summarized in Moffatt's *Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament* (third edition, 1918, pp. 90-104).

The question of the date of *Galatians* is also quite undecided. There is a tendency among recent critics to regard *Galatians* as prior to *Corinthians,* and perhaps even to *Thessalonians*. The latter view seems to me quite untenable, and the former improbable on internal evidence.

Among modern English Commentaries, those of Lightfoot (eleventh edition, 1892), Findlay (*Ex. B.*, 1893), Emmet (1912), and Burton (*I.C.C.*, 1921); deserve special mention. See also A. B. Bruce: *St. Paul's Conception of Christianity* (1894), and H. D. A. Major: *The Gospel of Freedom* (1912).

CHAPTER VI

THE SECOND GROUP OF PAULINE EPISTLES—II

The Epistle to the Romans. (A.D. 56 or 57)

We gather from this Epistle that it was written while Paul was on his way to Jerusalem, bearing with him the alms which had been collected in Macedonia and Achaia (*Acts* xx. 2-3). The subject resembles that of the *Epistle to the Galatians,* but it is here treated in a very different spirit. In *Galatians* Paul is contending fiercely with Judaisers. In *Romans* he discusses Judaism as a system, but he almost ignores the existence of Judaisers. The great schism which had nearly split the Church into two separate bodies, is now hardly alluded to, though the relation between Judaism and Christianity is one of the chief, if not the chief subject of the Epistle. Baur and his Tübingen followers exaggerated the importance of this schism, making it the key to early Church history, and especially to all sound criticism of almost every New Testament Book. Their view is now generally abandoned, but they have nevertheless succeeded in giving to this particular controversy a quite undue prominence. We cannot, of course, ignore it while studying the Galatian letter, but we err if we persist in reading references to the Judaisers into the Epistle which we have to consider.

The problem then arises: Why did Paul introduce so much about Judaism into an Epistle to the Romans? The answer is that he was dealing with the relation of Christianity to other religions, and that all other religions would naturally be divided by him into Jewish

and Pagan. The special relation of Christianity to the former would sufficiently account for the prominence given to it, even if the author had not been himself a Jew and an ardent lover of his own countrymen. The fact that they hated and persecuted him, and that he fought them with all his might, could not shake his allegiance to the people of Israel. He would have been content to have his own name blotted out of the Book of Life, if by so doing he could have brought them to the knowledge of the truth.

Romans differs from most of Paul's other Epistles in being addressed to a Church with which the writer had no personal acquaintance. He can have known very little of the circumstances or special needs of the Christians of the capital, but he had longed with a mighty longing to visit the great city, the seat of that empire which included all civilized nations. He may well have hoped to organize from headquarters a world-wide spiritual empire which should become indeed the Kingdom of God. His visit had been again and again postponed. What could be more natural than that he should write to the Roman Christians, in advance, a letter that should be, if not a systematic exposition of the whole Gospel, at least a declaration of what Christianity meant primarily to him, and of the relation in which he believed it to stand to the religions of the world. No doubt the fact that he had so recently written *Galatians* coloured his work. For the purpose of his controversy with the Judaisers he had been compelled to look inwards, to ask: What in essence is my religion to me? He had found his answer: That God is, in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself, that it is by a purely spiritual act, by faith and faith only, that we accept this reconciliation, and that such faith must express itself in love. What subject was better suited for an Epistle to the great city, unknown to the Apostle save by imagination, the city that by his mind's eye was already seen as the future metropolis of Christianity? Thoughts and feelings that sprang spontaneously from

his soul when dealing with the Galatians he now expands and clothes with mature expression in a letter to Rome.

The Gospel that he now proclaims depends on three main facts:

(1) The Moral Law.—The world has been a moral failure, and that not from Ignorance, but from Sin. The Jew had the Commandments; the Gentile had Conscience; but neither had been obedient to Divine Monition. Hence came the need of Redemption.

(2) The Divine Purpose.—God is righteous, and will make men righteous. His justice sweeps away all unequal dealing between Jew and Gentile.

(3) The Human Response.—Faith gives us certainty of this Divine Love, and enables us to respond to it and to live a Christian life. Can we continue to sin because God is so gracious as to continue to forgive?

Everything else in the *Epistle to the Romans* is subordinate. Thus the proof that all Israel will be saved is to a Jew like Paul, a culminating manifestation of the Divine Love, and of the certain fulfilment of the Divine promises. He does not notice that a similar argument would prove that all mankind will be made alive in Christ. This he had expressly declared in *I. Corinthians* xv. 22, but now, writing as a fervently patriotic Jew, he confines the statement to his own countrymen.

At Rome the Jews had formed an important colony. We know that four Jewish embassies visited Rome between B.C. 161 and B.C. 129. Cicero, in *Pro Flacco*, refers to a large Jewish settlement in the city. Josephus mentions that there were eight thousand Jews in Rome. At the Pentecostal foundation of the Christian Church Roman Jews were present (*Acts* ii. 10). Some of these may have been converted and on their return have established a Christian Church in Rome, and the constant flow of provincials to the capital would soon bring in both Jewish and Gentile adherents, apart from any conversions in the city itself. It is quite possible that Peter had visited Rome before Paul wrote his

Epistle to the Romans. The latter no doubt says that it was not his custom to build upon another's foundation (*Rom*. xv. 20), but he goes on to imply that in this case he makes an exception. Very early traditions associate Peter with Paul in the foundation of the Roman Church, and represent both Apostles as suffering martyrdom in the great city. There is no sufficient reason for rejecting this tradition, nor even in a somewhat modified form, the later legend of Peter's twenty-five years episcopate in Rome. This subject will be discussed in our next chapter.

Roman Christianity would naturally have been recruited from the ranks of both Jews and Gentiles, but Paul writes to the Romans as to men mainly of Gentile origin, and he speaks of Jews in the third person in the ninth and also in the eleventh chapter. No doubt he assumes that his readers would be familiar with Judaism, but this may be sufficiently accounted for by the fact that the Old Testament was still to Christians the only 'Scripture,' and that they would all have naturally received instruction in its books. Moreover, there would be some converted Jews and some converted Proselytes among the Roman Christians, and these would have helped to familiarize the Gentile converts with the narratives and doctrines of the Old Testament. Paul probably knew little of this community, but he was familiar with other churches where a similar admixture was to be found, and he would thus have acquired the habit of assuming a Jewish element even in congregations that were mainly composed of converts from Paganism. Moreover, the fact that he was himself a Jew must not be forgotten. He must needs view his religion as partly evolved from Jewish antecedents, and speak of the law as leading to the Gospel, even when addressing men who had not come to Christ by the Old Testament path. He is primarily concerned with the fact that they are Romans, citizens, as he himself claimed to be, of the city that dominated the world. And because Rome was the centre of the empire it was the more

natural that in writing thither Paul should speak of Christianity in relation to the world's religions, of his faith in relation to the spiritual energies of the unconverted, of the Law of Christ in relation to the law which God has written in the hearts of all men.

We have next to ask what the Apostle meant by Faith, that faculty which gives us the certainty of Divine Love and enables us to respond to it. The prime element in Paul's conception of Faith is trust—trust in God and in Christ, or in God through Christ. Thus, under the influence of the Divine Spirit, Faith interprets the death of Jesus as the outcome of God's Love (v. 1), and by this Faith we are justified—*i.e.*, both made righteous and accounted righteous; and we can claim no merit for this, since Faith is itself the gift of God. In his desire to insist on the degradation of human nature Paul rather shirks the philosophic problem of human responsibility and human free-will. His object is evidently practical. He protests indignantly against the notion that justification by Faith extenuates or annuls our moral obligations (iii. 8). He thus asserts a responsibility for our characters and our conduct which would be absurd if our wills were enslaved, whether by God, by circumstances, or by heredity. If chapter nine is understood as denying all freedom of the will, we can only say that it is contradicted by chapter ten.

But while Paul's essential idea of Faith is that of trustfulness, he sometimes uses the word as if it were akin to belief, and sometimes he connects it with spiritual insight or intuition. The former is the chief use of the word 'faith' in the *Epistle of James,* the latter in the *Epistle to the Hebrews,* where Faith is defined as the proving of things not seen (*Heb.* xi. 1, R.V.). The different uses of the word by James and by Paul explains the apparent opposition between the views of the two inspired writers. If *Faith* means belief and *Works* means beneficence, James is right in asserting the infinite superiority of the latter. Paul approximates to James's idea of Faith in *Rom.* i. 5, iii. 3, x. 8, xvi. 26.

But even in such cases he is always thinking of something more than mere belief. There is always the element of enthusiasm and loyalty to a personal Christ and a personal Father. Similarly in the case of 'works,' James means good works proceeding from a good heart; but Paul sometimes uses the expression in reference to the works of the Mosaic Law only—circumcision, ceremonialism, etc.—while at other times he is thinking of works apart from all their motives. An action may be objectively good, and yet it is of little value unless it proceed from a right inward and spiritual motive. Justification by Faith is an assertion of the fact that God is the sole Source and the sole Judge of Righteousness. He alone can make men good or impute goodness to them. This goodness we attain by trusting in God, especially as revealed in Jesus.

The following is a summary of the main points of the *Epistle to the Romans:*

CHAPTER I., 1-17.—Paul, prevented from visiting Rome, writes to proclaim his Gospel; 'for therein is revealed a righteousness of God.' We should have expected 'the,' as in A.V., rather than 'a,' as in R.V. Paul undoubtedly believed that his Gospel revealed *the* righteousness of God; but he would not wish to deny the earlier revelation of this, by prophets, lawgivers, and psalmists. These might all be summed up in the revelation of Christ, but at the beginning it suffices to proclaim that a new light is thrown on Divine righteousness by the Life and Death of Jesus. It works 'by faith unto faith.' We apprehend it by faith, and it leads us on to greater faith.

CHAPTERS I., 18, TO III., 24.—Men have failed to respond to God's call to righteousness. There was sufficient revelation in the visible world of Nature, but to this revelation they have wilfully shut their eyes, preferring their own speculations, which have led them into idolatry and thence into immorality. This important section makes it clear how completely Paul recognized the freedom of the human will. In fact, he went further

than most of us can go. He speaks of primitive man as being able to discern the invisible God through visible created things. His argument, of course, only requires the recognition that some sense of the Divine has existed from the first. Therefore men are 'without excuse because that, knowing God, they glorified Him not . . . wherefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts unto uncleanness.' Then follows a terrible picture of the world's depravity, with the consequent wrath of God. Virtue was, no doubt, found side by side with depravity. It is not for one man to judge another, seeing that all are sinners; but the distinction remains, and will bring 'tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that worketh evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek; but glory and honour and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.' We have here what was, to a Jew, the fundamental dividing-line between his race and the rest of humanity, loosely called 'Greeks.' God's choice of the former gives them a double prerogative, a severer judgment as well as a greater privilege. Thus the Divine Justice is asserted, and the narrow view which led Jewish and Christian dogmatists to deny the value of Pagan virtue is summarily rejected. Any doubt on this point is swept away in the passage ii. 14-16, which asserts that 'when Gentiles, which have no (Mosaic) law, do by nature the things of the (moral) law . . . they show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness therewith . . . according to my Gospel.' There are Jews, on the other hand, who boast of their law, and presume to teach others, who yet fall into the very sins which they denounce, and so cause the name of their God to be blasphemed among the Gentiles. Circumcision only profits if it leads to morality. Spiritual things alone are important. 'For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly . . . but he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart. . . . What advantage then hath the Jew? Much, every way: first of all that they were entrusted with the oracles of

God' (ii. 28 to iii. 2). The word translated *oracles* is *logia,* an expression which certainly includes 'sayings,' and may also include 'doings.' Here it refers to the whole Old Testament revelation of God's Character, but perhaps has a special reference to His promises. At this point Paul breaks off the thread of his discussion and digresses into a Rabbinical argument in which I will not follow him.

CHAPTER III., 25-31.—Jesus has brought righteousness within the reach of all men, but it can only be obtained through Faith. This is the conclusion towards which Paul has been working. The new revelation completes the two old ones—the revelation written in the hearts of all men, and the revelation specially given to the Jews. This conclusion, far from disparaging the older laws, confirms them. I here follow the margin of the R.V., reading *law* in place of *the law*. If the latter reading be taken, it is the Mosaic Law alone which is alluded to.

CHAPTERS IV. AND V.—Circumcision gives no exclusive privileges. Even Abraham was justified before he was circumcised, and long before the Mosaic Law. The Faithful are the true heirs of Abraham. Fallen humanity is redeemed through Christ, Life triumphing over Death and Grace over Sin. The text which asserts that 'Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness,' was a favourite subject for debate among the Jews. It is discussed no less than ten times by Paul's contemporary Philo, and also by many earlier Jewish writers; but Paul's treatment of the subject is quite original. Isaac, born of aged parents, is made a type of Jesus rising from a dead body. Abraham's faith is made to typify that of the Christian. But the Apostle cannot rest in the thought that all the Faithful are heirs of Abraham. Craving for a more universal salvation, he goes back to Adam, and maintains that all who have inherited his sinfulness will also receive the free gift of salvation. 'As through one trespass the judgment came unto all men to condemnation, even so through one act

of righteousness the free gift came unto all men to justification' (v. 18). The one act of righteousness probably combines the Incarnation, the Righteous Life, the Crucifixion, and the Resurrection. Paul does not write as a schoolman or a logician. He is possessed by four thoughts—the Righteousness of God, the Sinfulness of Man, the Reconciliatory Work of Christ, and the Faith by which we partake of the third and rise to the first. He sometimes uses justification in its original sense of *making* men righteous, and sometimes in the forensic sense of *accounting* them righteous. The two are hardly separable in his mind, so sure is he that it is those who by God's grace are righteous whom He accounts to be so, and that the smallest real goodness, the feeblest spiritual effort and aspiration are precious in His sight. The words Atonement and Reconciliation always mean, when used by Paul, a conforming to the Character of Christ and of His Father. 'Being therefore justified by faith, let us have peace with God.'

Chapters VI., VII., and VIII.—The supersession of the Mosaic Law does not imply that of the Moral Law. The conflict between temptation and the demands of morality rages in each individual soul; but Christ guarantees a righteous life on earth and an everlasting life hereafter. Here, as at every stage of his argument, Paul insists that his doctrine, far from doing away with the need for human virtue, makes it all the more incumbent. 'Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid.' Believers were baptized into the death of Christ, 'that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life. . . . Our old man was crucified with him that the body of sin might be done away. . . . Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies that ye should obey the lusts thereof.' Again and again Paul gives precision to the terms *righteousness* and *sin* by lists of virtues and vices, but his meaning is sometimes obscured by superfluous quotations from the Old Testa-

ment, and by illustrations which do not illustrate it for modern readers, whatever they may have done for his contemporaries. Our own hearts tell us the meaning of slavery to sin, and we are not helped greatly by having it compared to the relation of slaves to their masters, of Jews to the Mosaic Law, or of wives to their husbands. Such arguments are historically interesting as specimens of Rabbinical methods, but they tend rather to obscure than to make clear Paul's order of thought. Of more permanent value is the account that follows of the struggle in the soul of man between aspiration and temptation. Here Paul speaks from his own personal experiences. His had been a more than usually untroubled childhood, till the Tenth Commandment suddenly made him realize that he was a covetous creature. Before that he had been 'alive, apart from the law.' But then his heart sank. 'The commandment which was unto life, this I found to be unto death. . . . The law is holy and the commandment holy and righteous and good.' Yet the knowledge of the law not only awakened his sense of sin, but brought home to him his inability to conquer it. 'What I hate, that I do . . . for to will is present with me, but to do that which is good is not. For the good which I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I practice. . . . For I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see a different law in my members warring against the law of my mind. . . . O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?' Thus Paul recreates for us his old mental condition, but thoughts of his deliverance can no longer be restrained, and he thanks God that such deliverance has come through Jesus Christ, Whose Law of the Spirit has made him free from the Law of Sin. 'But if any man hath not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His.' Once more we get back to the essential point that no imputing of goodness can take the place of goodness itself; that our religion is the acquiring of a certain spirit, the Spirit of Christ. 'The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our

spirit that we are children of God. . . . For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.'

In this rapid summary I have omitted the digression on Predestination (viii. 29-30), because it rather breaks into the order of thought. It is in itself very interesting, and the more so from the part it played in the great controversy between Calvinists and Arminians in the seventeenth century. In its original place it is a glorification of the foreknowledge of God, of His election of Paul and others to Gospel privileges, and to the glory that is and shall be. The words Foreknowledge, Predestination, Election, Justification, have been so much bandied about by theological combatants, that we are apt to forget that this passage is introduced in connection with the words 'that to them that love God all things work together for good.' These, Paul tells us, 'are called according to His purpose,' and this leads the Apostle to consider the whole subject of God's Call and Purpose. The controversialists have neglected the main statement in order to wrangle over the secondary one, and have thus brought the Pauline theology into some disrepute. It is right, however, to notice that Paul's conception of Predestination, Free-will, Original Sin, Justification, and the like, were greatly influenced by his Rabbinical education. Even when his conclusions differ from those of the Rabbis, his method and his choice of problems are often borrowed from them. Thus in the Rabbinical schools Predestination and Free-will were both taught with no co-ordination. It is doubtful whether Paul ever realized the apparent contradiction between them.

CHAPTERS IX., X., XI.—The acceptance of the Gentiles is consistent with equity and with the promises made to the Jews. This statement is preceded by a very solemn declaration of a willingness to be 'anathema from

Christ,' for the sake of his fellow-countrymen. When Paul considers the history of his race, their adoption by God, the revelations made to them, the great men they have produced, 'of whom is Christ, as concerning the flesh,' he is conscious of 'an unceasing pain.' But he draws comfort from the fact that the Old Testament was not given in vain, since Christians enter into the Jewish inheritance. He fortifies this conclusion with Rabbinical arguments about the two sons of Abraham and the two sons of Isaac, and then comes near to denying all freedom of the will by insisting upon the Omnipotence of Him Who said, 'I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy.' To the objection that, if so, man is not really responsible, Paul replies by a denial of our right to argue with God; but he soon drops this very uncharacteristic argument, an argument which Calvinists have treated almost as if it were the essence of Pauline theology, and returns to his more usual view of God's justice and man's responsibility. The rejection of the Jews is not arbitrary. It was due to their lack of faith and of spiritual insight. Therefore Jesus was to them the prophesied stone of stumbling. But their rejection is not final. Paul goes on praying that they may all be saved, insisting that for them, as for the Gentiles, there is still an open door. 'Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be put to shame.' To Jew and to Gentile let us preach the glad tidings of good things, till the bold prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled and God is found, even of them that sought Him not. The rejection of the Jews is due to their obstinacy and their legalism. It is but temporary; all Israel will be ultimately saved.

Whatever our view of the logic of Paul's argument, we find ourselves carried along by his patriotic fervour and his ardent conviction that God would not for ever reject His Chosen People. The author's sympathies are divided. He is at once the Apostle to the Gentiles, and an Israelite of the seed of Abraham. He suggests that God is provoking the two sections of humanity to a rivalry in faith. Let each take warning from the other,

remembering, however, that God never repents of the gifts He has given. His purpose is 'that He might have mercy upon all.' At this thought Paul bursts into ardent thanksgiving: 'O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God.' 'For of Him and through Him and unto Him are all things. To Him be glory for ever. Amen.'

CHAPTERS XII. AND XIII.—God's Goodness involves corresponding obligations. We should devote ourselves to Him, judging ourselves soberly as members of one body with different gifts, all of which should be exercised in God's service. So, too, with our social duties. 'He that giveth, let him do it with liberality; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness.' Duty after duty is touched upon with a nice discrimination. To Paul, Faith is simple, but religion is complicated. It needs tact, sincerity, hopefulness, and the like. If we heap coals of fire on the heads of our enemies it must be in order to 'overcome evil with good.' Next, as to political duties, Paul urges obedience to the powers that be, on the ground that rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil; but the supreme law must be loving one another. Meanwhile our salvation draws near. The night is far spent, and the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness and put on the armour of light.

CHAPTERS XIV. AND XV. give us the application of Paul's principles to such practical problems as food offered to idols and the observance of holy days. Such problems must be solved by combining individual responsibility with mutual charity. Let us all try to imitate the self-sacrifice of Christ. Paul then justifies his writing to the Romans, asks for their prayers, and hopes soon to pay them his long deferred visit.

CHAPTER XVI. was probably written to some other church, whose members and circumstances were well known to Paul. It has been wrongly appended to this Epistle.

Those who are in the habit of regarding the *Epistle to*

the Romans as a treatise on metaphysics and formal theology will probably suspect that this summary gives undue prominence to its ethical aspects. In reality no portion of the Epistle has been more rigorously compressed. The disquisitions of Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, and Calvin have stamped on the popular imagination an impression of *Romans* which is, in some respects, misleading. Chrysostom, in the fourth century, had a better insight into its true character as primarily spiritual and only secondarily doctrinal. Its main problem is: How can a man be right in the eyes of God? The Jew would reply: 'By keeping the law'; to which the earliest Christians added: 'And by becoming followers of Jesus.' But Paul said: 'You cannot keep the law. It tells you what is right, but does not enable you to do it. Christ alone can transform you into new creatures. He will put Jew and Gentile right in the eyes of God if they turn to Him with enthusiastic loyalty.' The danger of the Pauline doctrine was that it seemed to subordinate morality to religion. To Jews this danger was modified by the profoundly ethical character of their religion. But to Gentiles, whose religions were for the most part unmoral, it was possible that the doctrine of Justification by Faith might seem a denial of the supreme importance of righteousness. In later books of the New Testament we shall find frequent references to this denial; and it is significant that there is no sort of reference to Justification by Faith in the Pastoral Epistles, which, if they were written by Paul, were his latest writings.

NOTE ON CHAPTER VI

The *Epistle to the Romans* greatly influenced the theology of Augustine, Anselm, and other Fathers. From the time of Luther and Calvin, it has been specially beloved by Evangelical Protestants, who find in it support for their views as to the Atonement, while the Calvinists claim some of its sentences as plainly on their side. On the other hand, men

like Colenso, F. W. Newman, Jowett, Matthew Arnold, etc., maintain that the theology of *Romans* is essentially rationalistic—an expression of the supreme importance of spirituality and morality. Even writers whose aim is less controversial, can hardly keep their own beliefs wholly apart from their attempts to interpret Paul's.

The majority of competent critics hold that chapter xvi. did not belong to the original Epistle; but Zahn, Harnack, Sanday, and Headlam deny or question this. The view that most or all of the chapter was originally addressed not to Rome, but to Ephesus or some other Church, has received wide acceptance. The fragment may include verses 1 to 13 (Moffatt), or may begin at verse 3 (Ritschl, Ewald, etc.), and may end at verse 20 (Reuss, Weiss), or even at verse 16 (Hausrath, Schmiedel). Verses 25 to 27 are probably additions by an editor who may have included in the Epistle several fragments found in the archives of the Roman Church. Some of these imply that Paul had many friends in the Church, to whom he is writing, and that he knew that certain heresies were prevalent there. In reality he was quite a stranger to the Church in Rome. Renan suggests that chapters i. to xi. form a treatise, sent round to a variety of churches, with a special postscript added for each church (chapters xii. to xiv. being included in more than one of these postscripts); and that our version combines the treatise and several postscripts. Even if Renan's elaborate analysis is erroneous, his general view is plausible; but it is only one of a number of ingenious attempts to show that the Epistle is composite, and to distinguish between its different parts. Most recent critics admit the possibility of interpolations, but no convincing disproof of the substantial unity of chapters i. to xv. has been established. It is natural enough that so original an attempt to deal with vast problems should contain what may seem to be inconsistencies. Again, it is quite in Paul's manner that he should sometimes seem to be addressing Jews, and sometimes Gentiles, without any direct indication of the change. The fact that some portions of the Epistle are absent from some of the old manuscripts may indicate only that abridged versions were used—*e.g.*, for public reading in churches. Thus chapter xv. might be omitted as unsuitable for public

reading (Godet, Hort). So, too, the words 'in Rome' (i. 7) might naturally be omitted in a manuscript intended for another church (Schmiedel). Other omissions might have a doctrinal object.

Many Protestant critics regard *Romans* as a sort of summary of Paul's theology; but this would imply that he attached little weight to Sacraments or to Eschatology. Baur regards chapters ix. to xi. as the essential messages of the Epistle. Weizsäcker, Ewald, and Grafe, lay special stress upon its anti-Jewish spirit; but Pfleiderer, Bleck, Hilgenfeld, etc., hold that Paul's object was rather to reconcile the two parties than to attack one of them. Baur and Zahn hold that the Roman Church was predominantly Jewish, but Weizsäcker, von Soden, Denney, Pfleiderer, Jülicher, Peake, and other recent writers take the opposite view. Chapters i. to xv. seem to me to be obviously addressed mainly to Gentiles.

So much good work has been devoted to this Epistle, that it is difficult to select a few books for special mention. Among admirable commentaries are: Sanday and Headlam (I.C.C., 1895); Gifford (Speakers' Com., 1881); Parry (C.G.T., 1912); Denney (Ex. G.T., 1904); Fulford (C.R.V., 1909). See also Rutherford (translation and analysis, 1914), and Godet (English Translation, 1888).

CHAPTER VII

THE CHURCH IN ROME

(A.D. 42-60)

We must now return to the question of the origin of the Christian Church at Rome. In the first century the city contained more than a million people, of whom more than half were slaves. Of the free men more than half were paupers, more or less supported by the state. Slaves were constantly being turned into free men, but their ranks were no less constantly recruited by prisoners of war, while the number of freemen was kept down by a widespread reluctance to marry and a still stronger reluctance to have children. Along the fine military roads and the well-organized sea routes there flowed a constant stream of officials, merchants, and other travellers to and from the city. Preachers and practisers of new and old religions were specially attracted towards the headquarters of empire, where they would find a mixture of all races and a public ever eager for fresh sensations or fresh ways of salvation. There was naturally a Jewish colony. When Pompey took Jerusalem he carried many Jews back to Rome, and there sold them as slaves. Their masters appear to have speedily recognized and made use of their business aptitudes, on terms which enabled many Jews to purchase freedom. The fact that they were a stiff-necked race, ready to endure anything rather than violate their laws and customs, no doubt made their masters more willing to liberate them on easy terms. The liberated Jews established a colony on the comparatively thinly populated land north of the Tiber. Their commercial value was appreciated by most of the emperors, and they

were allowed a kind of home rule. They kept their own Sabbaths and other Jewish customs. They were allowed to settle their own legal disputes, and when emperor-worship was established, the Jews alone were not required to conform.

In spite of occasional persecution, the colony flourished, and in the first half of the first century it probably numbered about forty thousand people, without counting the 'God-fearers,' attracted to the synagogues by the sublime monotheism and the austere morality of the Old Testament. But in A.D. 50 the Jews were ordered to leave Rome. Suetonius attributes this expulsion to riots instigated by one Chrestus. The historian probably misspelt the name, and no doubt supposed that riots connected with the name were instigated by the man who bore it. It is tolerably certain that by this time a Christian sect had grown up under the shadow of the synagogue, and that disputes between Christian and other Jews had arisen in the colony. We have, however, little information about the origin of this Roman Christianity. In the polyglot congregation addressed by the Apostles on the great day of Pentecost there were 'sojourners from Rome, both Jews and Proselytes.' Some of those who had come to keep the feast would no doubt return to Rome. Whether any of them were then converted we can only guess, but it seems probable enough that such conversions took place, and that the converts inquired further from Peter and the other Apostles concerning the new religion. No other pilgrim group had come from so great a distance or from so famous a city. It seems plausible to date Peter's interest in Rome from this early period (A.D. 29).

Other Jewish pilgrims from Rome had settled at Jerusalem or in the neighbourhood and would have synagogues of their own. In the list of such synagogues in *Acts* vi. the first place is given to that of the Libertines, who were probably Roman freedmen. Numerically they cannot have been comparable with the Alexandrians, and the order of precedence probably suggests that the

opposition to Stephen was specially vigorous among the Roman Jews. This led to a sort of missionary expedition of Peter and John, our first indication of any of the Twelve leaving Jerusalem. In *Acts* ix. we find Peter again on a missionary journey, and from this time onwards we catch glimpses of him in this capacity at Antioch, Corinth, and elsewhere.

The old idea that the Twelve remained at Jerusalem as governors of the Jerusalem Church, and further as a sort of supreme court of appeal, must be abandoned. The word *apostle* simply meant *missionary*, and according to old and widespread traditions, the Gospel was carried into many distant lands by members of the original Apostolate. No doubt they must often have revisited Jerusalem, but when Agrippa embarked on his policy of persecution, James and Peter were apparently the only Apostles in the Holy City. James was put to death and Peter imprisoned. Escaping from this imprisonment, Peter reported himself to the brethren, after which he practically disappears from the record in *Acts*, in which hitherto he had been the chief figure. Can it be that he had gone to Rome? According to a widespread tradition, Peter founded the Roman Church and was its Bishop for twenty-five years. One form of this tradition fixes the date of his coming as in the second year of the Emperor Claudius. This *exactly* corresponds with the suggestion that the disappearance of Peter from the pages of *Acts* was due to the fact that he had gone far away from the scenes with which that book was concerned in the chapters that follow his abrupt disappearance.

It was natural enough that the Twelve should scatter as missionaries rather than remain in the little Church of Jerusalem. And if they did so disperse, we can well understand that their trusted leader should be chosen to direct the work from the capital of the empire. The legend that Peter was the founder or joint founder of the Church in Rome, has been fiercely attacked by Protestant and other critics, but it has come down to us in such a

variety of ways and with so many differences of detail that it is difficult to doubt its historic foundation. Ignatius, for instance (*circa* A.D. 110) couples Peter and Paul together as the great authorities for Roman Christians, though he does not say that they founded the Church (*Ignatius ad Romanos* iv.). Irenæus (*circa* A.D. 180) makes the definite assertion that Peter and Paul founded the Roman Church (*Irenæus adv. Hereses* iii. 3). In the third and fourth centuries the tradition appears from all directions east and west, in Greek, Syrian, Armenian, and other languages. The evidence of early monuments and inscriptions in Rome confirms the story. There is little real evidence on the other side. We have seen that Paul's unwillingness to build upon another man's foundation is given as a general principle, but with a distinct implication that he will make an exception in the case of Rome. When he wrote his *Epistle to the Romans* there was evidently in Rome, a Christian Church of high repute and of many years standing (*Rom.* i. 8 and xv. 14), with a definite founder into whose sphere Paul hesitates to intrude. If that founder was Peter it would obviously be unnecessary to name him to the Roman Christians.

It is no doubt impossible to *prove* that Peter founded the Roman Church, or that he was for five and twenty years its Bishop or overseer, or that, if so, those twenty-five years were A.D. 42 to A.D. 67. We must remember that the word *Bishop* had hardly acquired a definite meaning during Peter's lifetime. If he visited the infant Church of Rome in A.D. 42 and again at intervals during the following twenty-five years, sometimes making a long stay, and looked up to with reverence whether present or absent; if he organized the worship and drew up the rules that were to be obeyed; if he appointed or laid his hands upon officials who were regarded as in some sense his lieutenants; the tradition that Peter founded and was the first Bishop of the Church in Rome is explained and justified.

If Peter reached Rome in A.D. 42 or 43 his attitude

there would naturally be the moderately liberal one which he adopted after the vision concerning Cornelius. The sort of compromise which he represented would naturally rouse opposition among the Christian Jews, and still more among the non-Christians. Thus the way would be paved for the strife and the riots which resulted, in A.D. 50, in the edict expelling Jews from Rome. Among those expelled were Priscilla and her husband, who went to Corinth and there met Paul. Intercourse with them may have helped to turn his face Romewards. It is unlikely that all the Christians left Rome in consequence of the Edict of Expulsion. It may, however, have caused those who remained to separate themselves from the synagogues. They would fall into three groups—Jewish Christians who had disobeyed or evaded the edict, converts from among the 'God-fearers' whom the edict would not touch, converts from the ranks of Gentile Pagans, or Gentile Christians who had migrated to Rome. Possibly even before the year A.D. 50, these converts from heathenism had formed themselves into a church or churches. Christians from the synagogues would naturally join some of these when the Jews were expelled from Rome. Thus the Roman Church would tend to become largely Gentile, a circumstance which may, perhaps, explain its need for a second founder. It seems fairly clear that the Mother Church at Jerusalem had organized itself on the Jewish pattern. Its president, James, corresponded roughly to the High Priest. The elders formed a sort of Sanhedrin. And, similarly outside Jerusalem, the organizations of Christian Jews would naturally correspond with that of the synagogue. As in a large town there might be several synagogues, so there might be several 'churches' in a single city meeting in private houses, each with its own group of officials, who could scarcely be called clergy, though the fact that they naturally administered the Eucharist would give them a *quasi* clerical position. The infusion of Gentiles would modify this state of things, for these Gentiles had practised other religions, with rites and

priests of their own. The word *episcopos* (bishop) was admirably suited for the mixed congregation, as it was familiar to Gentiles and also (from the Septuagint) to Greek-speaking Jews. In *Acts* xx. 28 we find Paul telling the Ephesian *Presbyters* that the Spirit has made them Bishops, to *shepherd* the Church. The three functions of elder, bishop, and pastor are thus combined, as the same men are officials, overseers, and providers of spiritual nourishment. The differentiation, the separation of functions, was to be the work of the next half-century. The tradition that in A.D. 55 Peter appointed a sort of executive committee at Rome, and that its members were called Bishops, is likely enough to be true. The committee would resemble the Sanhedrin, or those councils which in some places represented the various synagogues. But the Petrine organization would almost certainly be better suited to the needs of Jews than to those of Gentiles, while the Roman Church was constantly becoming less Judaic in its composition. A new 'founder' was therefore needed at the very time when the Apostle to the Gentiles was brought as a captive to Rome. To explain his coming we must now take up the thread of the story at the point reached in Chapter VI., when Paul returned to Jerusalem with the contributions from his Gentile Churches for the poor saints in the Holy City.

After an informal welcome the delegates were officially received by James and the presbyters. Paul told the story of the growth of the Gentile Churches. The Jerusalem elders appear to have been quite satisfied in their own minds, but they pointed out that Paul was much suspected by the Jewish Christians, who believed that he regarded the whole Mosaic system as suspended for Jews, as well as for Gentiles. The elders therefore suggested that he should give public proof that he regarded the law as binding on himself. He could do this by subscribing towards and joining in the seven days ceremonial which certain Jews were about to perform according to the law, in fulfilment of a vow. Paul

at once consented, but on the fifth day a rumour spread abroad that he had introduced some Gentile delegates into the Temple. A riot ensued, and he was only saved by the interposition of the Tribune who commanded the Roman garrison in a neighbouring castle. Paul was carried away by the soldiers into the castle, and there permitted to make a speech to the vast concourse of people that had assembled. He chose to speak in Aramaic, which would probably be better understood by the mob than Greek, and would also help to assert his claim to be a Hebrew. He told the whole story of his life, of the bigoted Pharasaism of his youth, of his persecuting zeal against the Christians, of his conversion, and of his present policy. His exposition roused the mob to new frenzy. He was hurried into the castle to be examined under torture, but he escaped this danger by appealing to his rights as a Roman citizen. This appeal put torture out of the question, and the Tribune called in the leading Jews to help him to adjudicate on the case.

Our account of the ensuing trial is incomplete. Paul claimed to have acted as a good 'citizen,' and this seems to have infuriated the High Priest, who was one of those called in to advise. He no doubt felt that the use of the word 'citizen' implied a claim to be a subject of Rome alone, and to owe no allegiance to Jewish authority. He bade those who stood near Paul to smite him on the mouth, and the expostulation of the Apostle called forth the furious cry, 'Answerest thou the High Priest so?' Paul at once apologized, explaining that he had not known that the man who had provoked him was the High Priest. Then he transformed the whole tone of the assemblage by appealing to the Pharisees in the words: 'Concerning the hope and resurrection of the dead am I called in question.' Some critics have severely blamed the Apostle for raising this issue. They point out, truly enough, that the charges against him were concerned with the position of the Gentiles, and not with the Future Life. But we must remember that to the

Apostle the Resurrection summed up Christianity and was the ground of hope, not only for the Jews, but for the whole of humanity. Moreover, it is probable that the Sadducees, though persecuting him on another charge, were really largely animated by their objection to him as a preacher of a Life beyond the grave.

From a tactical point of view Paul's words were brilliantly successful. The two parties turned on one another, and the Tribune once more carried off his prisoner, who was cheered in captivity by a vision of the Lord, telling him that he must bear witness in Rome. This would fulfil the deeply cherished desire of the Apostle, and he was content to travel as a prisoner if he were thus enabled to visit the capital. The Tribune sent him under guard to Cæsarea, with a letter to the Procurator Felix, in which he claims credit for having saved a Roman citizen from violence. The Jews followed with a lawyer named Tertullus, retained to prosecute the accused man before the Procurator. Then a fresh trial took place. Tertullus, after the usual compliments to the Judge, brought three charges against Paul. He accused him of being a cause of disorder, the leader of a new sect, and a profaner of the Temple. Paul answered by denying the first and third charges. To the second he pleaded guilty, but maintained that his sect accepted the whole Jewish Scripture, and therefore was not unlawful. Felix was a bad governor, but a well-informed judge. Following the precedent already set by Gallio, he declared that there was nothing unlawful in Christianity, and he then adjourned the trial, so as to give Tertullus time to obtain evidence on the first and third charges. Paul was kept in easy custody for two years—A.D. 57-59—for Felix hoped that a bribe would be offered him to secure the Apostle's liberty. But at the end of two years Felix was himself recalled to Rome to answer charges of greed and injustice. In order to conciliate the Jews, he left Paul in prison.

Festus, who succeeded Felix as governor, ordered a fresh trial on very much the old lines. The old charges

were brought up, and as before were unsupported by evidence. The prosecutors must have known that their case could not be established. They relied, no doubt, on the Roman desire to conciliate local opinion, and Festus so far yielded as to ask Paul if he were willing to be tried at Jerusalem. Paul thereupon appealed to Cæsar—*i.e.*, he demanded that his case should be relegated to Rome—and Festus after consulting his legal advisers, assented to the appeal. He probably wished to avoid the alternatives of either enraging the Jews or else condemning an innocent Roman citizen. It happened, however, that King Agrippa came at this time on a visit to Festus. He was well acquainted with the Jewish religion, and Festus decided that he would hold yet another investigation, probably as a basis for the report which it would be his duty to send to Rome. Agrippa's knowledge of Jewish religion would make his opinion very valuable, and he was accordingly invited to preside. Once more Paul told the story of his life and conversion, emphasizing his belief in the Resurrection. Festus declared contemptuously that much learning had made Paul mad. The Apostle, turning to Agrippa, asked whether he believed the prophets—an awkward question, since Agrippa posed as a Jew before Jews, but did not care to be so regarded by the Roman governor. He therefore evaded the question, and advised Festus that Paul was innocent. As, however, he had appealed to Cæsar, to Cæsar he should go.

And so Paul set out for Rome. Of his adventurous journey thither it is not my intention to speak. Of his proceedings after his arrival we need only notice that he began by appealing to the unbelieving Jews of the capital. He had not yet abandoned hope for his countrymen, and he seems to have converted a few of them. The majority, however, refused to hear him, and he turned once more to the Gentiles—*i.e.*, presumably, to the unconverted heathen.

NOTE ON CHAPTER VII

In *I. Peter,* the author writes from 'Babylon,' by which he almost certainly means Rome. Even if *I. Peter* was not written by the Apostle, we have early evidence of the belief in Peter's presence in Rome. Clement (*circa* A.D. 97) and Ignatius (*circa* A.D. 110) imply this, and Papias (according to Eusebius) positively stated it. The Pauline characteristics of *I. Peter* are more easily accounted for, if the two Apostles were together at Rome during Paul's captivity. It becomes also more natural that Peter should take charge of the Pauline Churches addressed in *I. Peter,* i. 1. It must, however, be understood that the evidence for Peter's Roman episcopate, though weighty, is not conclusive. I must refer those who require further particulars as to the evidence to the articles on *Peter* in the chief Bible Dictionaries and Encyclopædias—*e.g.,* Chase's article in H.D.B. See also Edmundson's *The Church in Rome in the First Century* (1913).

CHAPTER VIII

PAUL'S EPISTLES FROM ROMAN CAPTIVITY—I

To the Colossians and to Philemon. (A.D. 59)

The uses of adversity have seldom been better illustrated than by the life of St. Paul. In earlier years he had suffered much. He had been stoned, flogged, imprisoned, and shipwrecked, carried as dead out of one city, hurried in peril of death from others. He had been surrounded by dangers from Jews, Romans, and from brigands as he travelled over lonely mountain passes, or faced motley crowds of mingled Asiatics and Europeans. While occupied in the founding of new churches he would be harassed by bad news from the old ones. He was frequently struck down by epileptic or other fits. Yet all the time the spiritual nature of the man was deepening. We can follow the process as we study his Epistles in the order in which they were written. Reading between the lines, we come to love the very human nature of the Apostle. We can almost hear his throbbing heart. One thing Paul still needed—a little leisure; and that one thing was provided by his captivity in Rome. Accordingly we come now to a fresh group of Epistles, less fervid, perhaps, than those written in the strain and rush of missionary life, but bearing the unmistakeable stamp of the better opportunities for thought which his captivity provided. Curiously enough, the authenticity of the greatest letter of this period has been disputed, and on plausible grounds, by a number of modern critics. But before we study the *Epistle to the Ephesians* it will be well to examine the earliest letters

from captivity, one addressed to the Colossians, the other to a single Colossian.

In the *Epistle to the Colossians* Paul is largely dealing with certain heresies which, in the course of the next century, came to be known as *Gnostic*. It will therefore be convenient to begin by noticing some of the currents of thought which afterwards developed into these heresies. Originally Gnosticism meant simply a claim to knowledge, and the common element in all the Gnostic heresies was the belief that Christians can get behind the doctrines of the Creed and offer a philosophic explanation of the tenets of Christianity, as also of the fundamental difficulties that beset all theologies. Up to this point Paul would have had no quarrel with Gnosticism. The fourth Gospel was to be, in effect, a Christian Gnosticism. So, too, was the teaching of Clement and the other orthodox Alexandrians. All the more philosophic Fathers of the Church were Christian Gnostics. Paul himself may be included among them. His quarrel was with what was falsely called *Gnosis*, with conclusions rather than with a method; although he undoubtedly distrusted both the methods and the spirit of the teachers he attacked.

Some of the problems with which Gnostics dealt may next be briefly touched upon. The Existence of Evil is, of course, the permanent puzzle to all who believe in an almighty and beneficent Deity. The Gnostics tried for the most part to evade this difficulty by relegating God to an obscure background, and interposing a number of forces and personalities to account for evil. One of their proposed solutions grew out of the antithesis of body and soul. Matter was regarded as essentially evil. The Divine Task is to triumph over this evil. Here Gnosticism split into two parties. One of these became purely ascetic. If the body, as something material, is essentially evil, we must fight not only against the lusts of the flesh, but also against all bodily appetites. Celibacy, fasting, and the like must be the weapons of our spiritual warfare. The other party was Antinomian. Christianity,

being concerned with spiritual things only, might view the fleshly lusts with indifference. Indulgence in them was not to be condemned, if only a man was walking in the Gnostic path. In some Oriental religions this strange licence of sensuality for the enlightened was already to be found, and indeed Gnosticism, in both its ascetic and its Antinomian aspects, was mainly an Oriental importation into the religion which had developed from Judaism by the transforming power of Jesus Christ.

But other aspects of Gnosticism were more closely connected with Judaism. To the early Church the Old Testament was the only Scripture, and Gnostics who professed Christianity were bound to deal with certain difficulties growing out of the Old Testament. One favourite way of doing this was to regard the Jehovah of the Old Testament as a sort of inferior Deity. He had created the Heaven and the earth, with their mixture of good and evil; but the True Ultimate God was far above Jehovah, as He was above all other gods and angels. Having once admitted that Jehovah was a sort of intermediate deity between God and man, it was natural to introduce other intermediate beings in order to get rid of other difficulties. These intermediate beings were sometimes regarded as ' angels ' of a comparatively concrete sort, such as had been made familiar to the later Jews through those of their sacred and apocryphal books that were written after the Babylonian captivity. Or again, the intermediate powers might be regarded as mere emanations. Christ, the Mediator, would naturally be included among these angels or emanations. He was an Emanation from God, who entered into the form of a Jewish peasant at his baptism, and departed before the Crucifixion. The peasant Jesus might suffer, but not the Divine Christ. Against this complicated *gnosis* Paul sets forth his doctrine that in Christ ' dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead, bodily.' He must not be ranked as one mediator among many, nor must His Body be excluded from His Personality. Similarly, the Apostle protests against the ascetic teaching of the new heretics, not yet

known as Gnostics. 'Let no man therefore judge you in meat or drink.' Christians must not subject themselves to ordinances such as 'Touch not, taste not, handle not.' Paul seems to condemn even the keeping of fast days or sabbaths, as well as the new philosophizing, voluntary humility, and the worshipping of angels (ii. 18). This is a difficult passage. The next word is translated *dwelling* in R.V. and *intruding* in A.V. In reality, however, it was the technical word for *initiation* into certain Oriental mysteries. So the verse may mean : Let no man rob you of your prize (Christ), by a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, with an initiation into visible things. Voluntary humility and worshipping of angels may refer to prostrations before and the cult of intermediate deities. But we know too little of the actual teaching of the Colossian heretics to be able to say what it is exactly that Paul is condemning. In his attack on voluntary humility it is possible that he is merely cautioning the ignorant against too humbly accepting the dogmatism of learned philosophers. Though ignorant, they possess the all-sufficing knowledge that it was the good pleasure of the Father that in Christ should dwell all the Fulness of the Godhead. Neither philosophies nor institutions must be allowed to interfere with this conviction. Paul's attitude towards ceremonialism was indeed undergoing some modification. During His Life on earth Jesus had laid stress upon the fact that obedience to Divine Law is a moral attitude rather than a conforming to any regulations, Mosaic or other. But by word as well as by practice He taught men to do good things, and not to leave ceremonial obligations unfulfilled. In *Galatians* and *Romans* Paul struck out legalistic obligations altogether. But the Church had soon returned to the Spirit of the Master, putting ethics first, and yet building up a new group of institutions to which she bade her members be loyal. Paul's earlier attitude was, perhaps, a necessary step towards this. The old legalism must be swept away, were it only to make room for the new

institutions. At any rate, Paul took the leading part in reconstruction, as he had in the previous destruction. Having denounced the old Judaic conceptions in *Galatians* and *Romans*, he now begins to realize the need for new ordinances; and in the Pastorals, if they are indeed Paul's, he sets himself vigorously to work to build up an organization. Not in vain had he dwelt in Rome, the centre of that imperial administration which he must have had ample opportunities for studying during his enforced leisure. If the Pastorals were Paul's, or even founded upon genuine letters of his, we may believe that in the preceding years there had arisen in his mind the conception of a Church which should be an Empire within the empire, with an ordered hierarchy corresponding to the Roman executive. This idea was to have an extraordinary development in the Middle Ages, but at first it occupied no more than a corner of Paul's mind. If he had learned from Rome the power that lies in careful elaborate organization, he had also learned very different lessons from other very different civilizations.

Christianity owed much to Judaism and much to Rome, but much also to Greece and to India. Platonism and Neo-Platonism contributed important elements, intellectual, emotional, and moral. But perhaps India contributed most. Brahminism and Buddhism contained the root ideas of the Incarnation—a deified humanity and a humanized God. Well might Paul ask concerning the Deity: 'Is God the God of Jews only? Is He not the God of Gentiles also? Yea, of Gentiles also' (*Rom.* iii. 29). It must, of course, be admitted that the elements contributed by Greece and India involved dangers from which early Christianity suffered severely. Intellectualism developed into Gnostic metaphysics, and emotionalism into Gnostic mysticism and ecstacy. Both of these found expression in a ritual that somewhat obscured the essentially spiritual character of Christianity. Nevertheless, Greek and Indian ideas were too valuable to be omitted from a world-religion. It is

one of Paul's supreme services that he imported into Christianity both Greek intellectualism and Oriental mysticism. The idea of the pre-existence of Christ; His self-limitation in the Incarnation with the object of redeeming humanity; His conquest of death by Resurrection; His in-dwelling in His disciples, making them partakers of Eternal Life; these, and things like these, constantly remind us of pagan myths, pagan incarnations, pagan stories of suffering, dying, and resurrecting gods, or of those Oriental 'mysteries' by means of which men strove to partake of Divine Life. Not for nothing was Paul brought into such close contact with Hellenic and Eastern thought before he turned Westwards. To some extent he was, perhaps, making himself all things to all men—a Greek to Greeks and a Syrian to Syrian—when he approximated his language to their religious ideas. But he was very far from merely using their language or even merely taking over their ideas. At every stage he transformed them, rejecting their baser elements, purging them of Nature-worship and of their slavery to forms. To the last he proclaimed that 'with freedom did Christ set us free. Stand fast, therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage' (*Gal.* v. 1). Similarly, to the last Paul fought against sensuality. For the mystical orgies, the wild delirium of the senses, he substituted an ordered enthusiasm which could lift men to Divine rapture, but could not drag them down to the level of beasts.

Even in the days when he believed in the literal truth of the Hebrew Apocalypses, he was sternly practical. The expectation of the Second Advent must not lead the disciples to neglect the humdrum drudgery of daily life. The spirits of the prophets should be subject to the prophets. But now heretics were exaggerating and perverting whole aspects of Paul's teaching, his logical argumentations, his antithesis of soul and body, his spiritualizing of the conception of Christ, so that the Jewish Peasant was almost forgotten in the thought of the Indwelling Presence. The dangers of excessive

intellectualism, of asceticism, and of the idea that Christ was a Divine Emanation, only temporarily tabernacled in a Jewish peasant, had to be overcome; and in the Epistles of the captivity Paul correlated opposite sides of his gospel by a fresh exposition of the Nature and Person of Christ. In particular he balanced the emphasis he had hitherto laid upon the Death on the Cross, by insisting on the Divinely human Life of which that Death was but the expression. This sublime truth was presently to find a still fuller expression in the fourth Gospel, but the germ of it is plainly discernible in the Epistles of the captivity.

We may now proceed to a brief summary of the first letter of the time of the Roman captivity—the *Epistle to the Colossians*.

Chapter I. begins, like most of the Epistles, with a salutation and a thanksgiving. It is part of Paul's tact and affection that he alludes to what is good in those to whom he writes, before touching upon what is less good. So here he tells the Colossians that he has heard of their faith, their love, and their hopefulness. These spring from the gospel that has been preached to them, 'even as it is also in all the world, bearing fruit and increasing.' It was, of course, only the coasts of the Eastern Mediterranean that had as yet received the gospel, but to the sanguine Paul it appears that 'all the world' is coming in. He prays that the Colossians may be filled with knowledge and spiritual wisdom, plainly showing that it is only false knowledge and unspiritual wisdom that he is about to attack. He desires for them such understanding as will 'bear fruit in every good work,' as becomes those who are redeemed by Him, 'who is the Image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in Him were all things created in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible; all things have been created through Him and with Him; and He is before all things and in Him all things consist.' So Paul works up to the central idea of this Epistle. Heretics are propounding their elaborate

systems of the Universe, classifying the visible and the invisible. The danger must be met by a sound Christology, which will put all the powers of heaven and earth into due subordination to Christ. 'For it was the good pleasure of the Father that in Him should all the fulness dwell, and through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, having made peace through the blood of His Cross.' The Atonement is in no way displaced in Paul's theology, but it is made part of the whole pleasure of God, part of the general supremacy of the Eternal Son. Notice, too, that special stress is laid on one special pre-eminence—'and He is the Head of the Body, the Church.' The conception of the Church as one Body, and not a mere collection of churches, is growing in the mind of Paul. He has gladly suffered for his disciples, and he dares to regard this as a filling up of 'that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for His Body's sake, which is the Church.' The one sufficient sacrifice has been offered, but it yet needs to be supplemented by the self-sacrifice of all the members. This is a *mystery*, an expression which, in Paul's mouth, always means something which was once hidden, but is now revealed. The 'mysteries' of the Oriental religions were hidden to the last from ordinary worshippers; but in Christianity this was not so. The humblest Christian may enter into the profoundest mysteries of the Faith if only he will walk in the Way.

CHAPTER II.—The first seven verses emphasize the fact that, although the Colossians have never seen Paul, he is intensely interested in their progress, and striving greatly for them, presumably in prayer and in the effort of writing to them such an Epistle as they need, so that they may not be deluded with persuasive words. We might have thought that care for the churches he had founded would have been sufficient to occupy the imprisoned and now ageing Apostle. But he included all churches in his love, and having had news of the Colossians, he must needs send them an Epistle. Among the things he rejoices over is their 'order.' He was always

anxious that enthusiasm should not create confusion. He proceeds to show what sort of thing it is, to which he fears the persuasions of false teachers may lead the Colossians. Of the heretic 'philosophy' we have already spoken. The exact reference in the phrases 'the tradition of men' and 'the rudiments of the world' cannot be determined without more knowledge than we possess of what the heretics were teaching. But from the next paragraph we judge that Judaisers were still giving trouble. It must be remembered that many Jews of the Dispersion had partly assimilated Greek and Oriental mysticism. Asceticism, too, was often preached by them. Even the cult of angels, though alien to Jewish tradition, had been implied in some of the Jewish Apocalypses. These Colossian heretics may have been trying to combine Christianity and Judaism with various Oriental tendencies. Such a combination was not unknown among the later Gnostics, though most of the latter were strongly opposed to Judaism. The references to ceremonialism might refer equally well to Judaism or to other ritualistic religion, and especially to Oriental mysteries.

As remedy for all the heresies, Paul repeats his gospel —the pre-eminence of Him Who died and rose again. Let the Colossians hold fast to 'the Head, from whom all the Body, being knit together through the joints and bands, increaseth with the increase of God.' The last phrase reminds us that the mystical side of Paul's theology is mainly, though not exclusively, revealed in these letters from captivity.

So in CHAPTER III., Christians are spoken of as mystically 'raised with Christ.' They are dead—*i.e.*, to sin. Their 'life is hid with Christ in God.' When He is manifested, 'then shall ye also with Him be manifested in glory.' The *right* asceticism is then declared to be a fighting against sin. Yet we must not be content with negative virtue. We must put on 'a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, long-suffering.' We must forgive as Christ forgave, and let peace rule in our hearts, as it did in His. The

great stress then laid upon joyfulness seems to suggest that the Colossians were, perhaps rather lacking in this, or perhaps that their heretical teachers were of a gloomy Puritanical sort. Other virtues are urged, including, characteristically, obedience of wives to their husbands and slaves to their masters; while husbands are to love their wives, and masters to render just and equal treatment to their slaves. Paul still seemed to fear the too rapid introduction of such social changes as were in the process of time to grow out of Christianity.

Of the concluding verses of the letter we will only mention that Tychicus, who carries the Epistle, is to be accompanied by Onesimus, of whom we shall next speak.

The Epistle to Philemon

While writing letters that were to mould the world's history, Paul yet found time to deal rather fully with what may seem to some a comparatively small matter—the question of a runaway slave named Onesimus, who had somehow come under the influence of the Apostle, and whom Paul actually instructed to return to his slavery. Paul's attitude in this matter might well shock a modern Christian who did not realize how completely slavery was taken for granted in the first century, as a reasonable institution which nobody would think of condemning. We have seen that Paul was specially anxious to carry through a theological revolution without disturbing existing social institutions. In social and political matters his own instinct was conservative, but apart from this he realized how greatly Christianity might be discredited if it seemed to be tending to disorder or revolution. That he bade Onesimus return to slavery is perhaps less remarkable, than that he wrote to the master of Onesimus a letter which the Church in all lands has for eighteen hundred years included in her sacred Scriptures; and this although the letter in question contains nothing of a doctrinal character. The master of Onesimus was

Philemon, a well-to-do Christian of Colosse. Paul asks him to treat his slave not as a slave, but as a brother, and he adds: 'I write unto thee knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say.' This presumably means: 'I know that thou wilt give him freedom.' Paul also offers to make good any pecuniary loss that Philemon had suffered. This suggests that the slave had stolen money from his master, but that the Apostle will not say this lest he should stamp Onesimus as a thief. Paul believed in the forgiveness of sins, and was not likely to wound a converted criminal by unnecessarily naming his crime. The whole letter is a masterpiece of tact. Though he is an Apostle and had himself converted Philemon, he will lay no commands upon him. He will not even advise the liberation of Onesimus. He leaves this matter to the good feeling to Philemon, only mentioning the facts, and the duty of treating a fellow Christian as a brother.

The letter is from 'Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, to Philemon, our beloved and fellow worker, and to Apphia our sister, and to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the Church in thy house.' Apphia was, perhaps, the wife of Philemon. Addressing the latter more particularly, Paul says he has heard 'of thy love and of thy faith which thou hast towards the Lord Jesus and towards all the saints.' Some critics tell us that this means faith in Jesus and love towards the saints, but in reality both words apply to both. Paul is about to ask Philemon to exercise love and faith towards the runaway slave, once a thief now a Christian. The request is thus expressed: 'Though I have all boldness in Christ to enjoin thee that which is befitting, for love's sake I rather beseech, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now a prisoner also of Christ Jesus: I beseech thee for my child whom I have begotten in my bonds, Onesimus.' The character of the Apostle breathes through every word. He has a right to command, but he prefers to appeal to his disciple's love. He is growing old, and would like to retain the services of Onesimus for himself; but he will not keep him from his lawful master.

Philemon has the legal right to cast Onesimus into prison, but so had the Roman Government to imprison Paul himself. 'If he hath wronged thee at all or oweth thee aught, put that to mine account. I Paul write it with mine own hand, I will repay it.' We have seen that writing did not come easily to that work-hardened hand; but there was here such need for delicacy and so personal an appeal, that Paul will not call in the aid of a scribe. 'Thou owest to me thine own self,' he says. 'Prepare also a lodging.' Philemon is to have the privilege of being the Apostle's host when he visits Colosse. He evidently expects soon to be released from his prison.

Surely from this short letter we can see what religion meant to Paul. It meant tenderness, meekness, and sweet reasonableness, in short a putting on of Christ, of the temper of Jesus. Can we wonder that the Church includes this letter in the New Testament, side by side with those marvellous Epistles written to the Romans and the Ephesians?

NOTE ON CHAPTER VIII

The Pauline authorship of *Colossians* is now generally accepted. Harnack, Renan, Sabatier, Jülicher, Moffatt, etc., agree in this with the more conservative Zahn, Lightfoot, Sanday, etc. Schmiedel, however, rejects the Pauline authorship.

Paul's tone of authority was apparently due to the fact that all Gentile churches were as yet in some measure under his jurisdiction. He had not founded or even visited the Church at Colosse, but he had heard enough of the Colossians to admire their faith and love; and yet he thinks them in special danger from false teaching—ascetic, unmoral, theosophic, and ritualistic. The heresies were as yet in germ, but Paul realized the significance of movements which were in time to endanger Christianity throughout 'Asia.' The view that the doctrines attacked are forms of second century Gnosticism, and that, therefore, the Epistle cannot be by

Paul, is defended by Weizsäcker, Brückner, etc., but the tendency of modern criticism is to find traces of the doctrines which the Epistle attacks, in various first century movements —*Alexandrian Judaic* (Eichhorn, Junker, etc.); *Essene* (Godet, Lightfoot, etc.); *Ebionite* (Davidson, Pfleiderer, etc.); *Pythagorean* (Grotius); *Oriental* (Hug); *Mithraic* (Steinmann)—as also the mixture of angel-worship and asceticism (Dibelius). Separately or in various combinations, such theologies and mystical religions were invading the churches in the lifetime of Paul, and appeared to him to militate against his simple Gospel. He therefore refers in turns to dangers from Greek philosophies, Phrygian mysteries, Mithras cults, and such Jewish eccentricities as we find signs of shortly afterwards in Philo and Josephus. There are no certain references to *Colossians* before Irenæus and Marcion (*circa* A.D. 140); but these take for granted that the Epistle is Paul's. The view that it contains later interpolations is maintained by Weiss, Holtzmann, Hausrath, and others, but the elaborate attempts to break up the Epistle, or to distinguish between earlier and later forms are at best ingenious guesses, based on inadequate evidence. The same may be said of the attempts to place it before the Roman Captivity; but its exact year and its priority to *Ephesians* are still unproved.

The Laodicean Epistle of *Col.* ii. 1 and iv. 16 was either *Ephesians* or a lost letter. The attempts to identify it with *Hebrews* or *I. Timothy,* or with the *Epistola ad Laodicences,* are confidently rejected by most modern critics. The *Epistola ad Laodicences* was probably a fourth century forgery.

Philemon was rejected by some of the early churches, on the ground of its triviality. Baur regarded it as the embryo of a Christian Romance; Weizsäcker as an allegory; Steck as an imitation of a letter by Pliny. But many modern critics regard it as a spontaneous product of the very human Paul. The fact that *Philemon* fits in well with *Colossians* seems to have inclined some 'advanced' critics to reject the former by way of discrediting the latter. Most recent critics see little force in any of the objections to what Renan calls 'this little masterpiece.' It is not possible to prove that Paul wrote it; but both its style and spirit are very Pauline.

It is included in Marcion's Canon (*circa* A.D. 140), and in the Muratorian (*circa* A.D. 170).

English Commentaries: Lightfoot (1890); T. K. Abbot (I.C.C., 1897); Williams (C.G.T., 1907); Clark (C.R.V., 1909). See also Sanday's article in Smith's D.B., and Cone (I.H., 1901).

CHAPTER IX

PAUL'S EPISTLES FROM ROMAN CAPTIVITY—II

To the Ephesians. (A.D. 60)

Authorship Disputed

In discussing the date and authorship of the New Testament books, the majority of the Higher Critics attach insufficient weight to two considerations. (1) *Tradition.* Every tradition must, of course, be judged on its merits; but when there are several early traditions, all pointing in the same direction, and especially when these traditions bear such marks of independence as the inclusion of contradictory details—they should not be entirely rejected, except upon the strongest internal or external evidence. This does not imply the complete acceptance of any tradition in the form in which it has come down to us; but the acceptance of that substratum of truth which can usually be extracted. (2) *Evidence of Genius.* When a book has the unmistakeable stamp of genius, we should hesitate to assign its authorship to an unknown writer. This principle may be illustrated from the criticism of secular literature. The finest passage in *Henry VIII.* is believed by many critics to have been written not by Shakespeare but by Fletcher. The critics may be right, but it is plainly an argument against this conclusion that Fletcher nowhere else reaches quite the same height of poetic genius. If, however, a critic appeared who maintained that this passage was written neither by Shakespeare nor by Fletcher, but by some unknown writer in the reign of James I., he would be expected to adduce very strong evidence in

support of his view. If he were to quote a passage in the play which seemed to refer to some event that took place after Shakespeare's death, we should probably prefer to believe either that that passage was a later interpolation, or that it referred to some perhaps forgotten incident in the poet's lifetime. History repeats itself sufficiently to justify such a belief.

Let us apply this line of argument to the *Epistle to the Ephesians*. If critics say that they find here references to heresies that did not exist till after the death of Paul, we reply : 'How do you know? In other Epistles which you admit to be genuine, there are similar difficulties. It is psychologically probable that many heresies existed before the heresiarch after whom they are named. Heresies grow out of difficulties that are inherent in certain doctrines, or in certain human minds. Views more or less Arian were held by predecessors of Arius, just as many ideas which we call Christian were held before the Nativity of Jesus.'

On the other hand, we have, in the *Epistle to the Ephesians*, a work of religious genius, recognized as such by readers of many nations and many centuries, whom it has inspired, comforted, elevated, controlled. It *may*, of course, have been written by Tychicus or by some unknown writer, even though it is felt by many competent judges to be the grandest of all the Pauline Epistles, or second only to the Roman letter. The fact remains that we actually know of one man, and of one man only, who was competent to produce this work. It claims to be his, and was assigned to him in the second century by authorities as diverse and as scattered as Marcio, Irenæus, Tertullian, and Clement of Alexandria. It was included in the Muratorian Canon, and its authorship was, I believe, not questioned till the nineteenth century. Its style in many respects resembles, if in some respects it differs from, that of the other Epistles of the same period. Its theology is in the main Pauline—*i.e.*, the theology of the Captivity letters, as developed since the *Epistle to the Romans*, and still

more since the *Epistle to the Thessalonians* was written. The only serious argument that can be brought against this mass of evidence, is the undoubted fact that the *Epistle to the Ephesians* seems to some modern critics to suggest an atmosphere later than the Sixties, and to contain theological and ecclesiastical ideas more advanced than even the letter to the Colossians. Thus we find in it a definite recognition of the Church as the Body of Christ. And yet, after all, every idea somewhere finds its first conception; and who was more likely to originate *this* idea, than the Apostle who had already originated so many others, and had even in places come very near to this one? Similarly, the Christology may be a little more mystical, in the best sense of the word, than anything else in the writings of Paul; but this objection applies no more to Paul than to any other first or second century writer, except the author of the Fourth Gospel, and perhaps Clement of Alexandria. No one will contend that either of these was the author of the *Epistle to the Ephesians*.

Again, it is argued that the complete disappearance of the division of the Church into Jews and Gentiles points to a later date; but it is probable that the Epistle was written from Rome, where the atmosphere would be most favourable to the breaking down of partition walls. Paul might, therefore, use language on this point, which would have been inappropriate to provincial churches, especially to those nearer to Jerusalem, or of a more Jewish character.

That the letter was especially addressed to the Ephesians is improbable. It was apparently a Circular Epistle, sent round to a number of churches. The name of each church may have been inserted in the copy it received, and the copy sent to the Ephesians may have been the one which secured admission to the Canon. Marcion's copy was addressed 'to the Laodiceans,' and two of our oldest and best manuscripts omit all references to a particular church. The absence of all personal greetings and specific allusions would be most unlike

Paul's practice, if he were writing to the Ephesians. If the Epistle were written to one single church, that church was probably, as suggested by the inscription on Marcion's copy, Laodicea; and the subsequent omission of this name may be due to the discredit into which this church fell, in consequence of its denunciation in *Rev.* iii. 14. But it was more probably a Circular Letter addressed to all the churches of Asia, each of which had its own name inserted in its own copy.

The style of *Ephesians* is very different from that of the early Epistles. The old crisp sentences give place to long involved paragraphs. Thus, in chapter i. verses 3-14 and verses 15-23 form two extraordinarily long sentences. The other Epistles of the Captivity period have similar characteristics. Paul is now out of the battle, no longer striving with adversaries. He is concerned with Mystical Universal ideas. Hence we are not surprised to find him diffuse where formerly he was concise. The close verbal affinity with *Colossians* is perhaps due to the fact that the dates were almost simultaneous. Paul may have prepared himself to write *Ephesians* by reading carefully what he had already written to the Colossians. He would naturally use again those phrases which he felt most adequately expressed his meaning. Many authors, and those by no means the least original, have so repeated themselves.

The subjects of this Epistle are akin to those treated in *Colossians,* but here they are dealt with in a more general way; partly because they are not treated in relation to definite heresies, and partly because the Epistle was addressed, not to a single church, but to several. Historically the time had come, now that the churches were no longer in their infancy, to teach the Mystical Unity of the Church. In the Jewish temple, with its wall of partition, Paul sees a type of the Old Dispensation. The new Temple—the Church—will have no such wall of partition. The struggle is now not merely the struggle of the individual Christian for his own salvation. It is the battle which the Church, under

its Divine Leader, has to wage against all the forces under the Devil's command. The expressions 'heavenly' and 'heavenly places' seem to refer to the scene of our spiritual life and conflicts, the world of ideas, which to Paul, no less than to Plato, were realities. The Heavenly is the Spiritual world, not a region in the clouds (*cf. Phil.* iii. 20). Our citizenship is even now in Heaven, for the Kingdom of Heaven is a present kingdom, and we look in hope for the coming thence of a deliverer. It is no longer an Apocalyptic, but rather a Spiritual Coming that we are to expect. Faith is now, as in the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, the power by means of which we grasp the Unseen.

CHAPTERS I. AND II.—Paul begins by praying that God may give the disciples a spirit of wisdom and revelation. They are Christians, and therefore the truth has been revealed to them; but God's scheme is not revealed once for all. We need more wisdom and more revelation. Revelation is progressive, and is always enabling us to comprehend better the breadth and length and height and depth of the Love of Christ. The Church is then treated under four different aspects: (1) a commonwealth—the Kingdom of God; (2) a building—the New Temple; (3) a living organism—the Body of Christ. We find a suggestion of this in *Romans* and *Corinthians*, but now it is supplemented by the idea of the originating, controlling, and life-giving function of the Head, which directs and uses all the members of the Body. The distinction between (2) and (3) is diminished by a curious mixture of metaphors. The building 'grows,' as if it were organic; the body is 'built up,' as if it were an edifice. (4) The Bride of Christ. The idea of a marriage relation between God and Israel is common in the Old Testament. Its transference to Christ suggests His Godhead (*cf. Hos.* ii. 19; *Ezek.* xvi.; *Mal.* ii. 11).

In his earlier Epistles Paul had written mainly as an individualist. Religion to him took its rise in the conflict with temptation waged in the individual soul.

Christ had bridged the gulf between the Righteousness of God and the Sin of Paul. So it must be with other individuals. Their duty was to trust in Christ. Thus they would become members of Him, and helpers one of another. Till the Captivity letters, Paul had hardly grasped the idea of the Church as anything more than a collection of redeemed souls, with bodies that had been duly baptized. The Redeemed were partakers of the Eucharistic service, but still as a mere collection of individuals, each of whom was indeed a member of Christ, and therefore, in a sense, part of a great Unity. But Paul scarcely realized that this Unity was something organic, until his captivity in Rome. In writing to the Colossians, we find some approach to this ideal; but in the *Epistle to the Ephesians* one of his main objects is to set forth the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ. Christ is the Head of the Church, but a head is incomplete without a body. Christ needed, if we may dare to say so, a body (i. 22 and 23). And so God gave Him ' to be Head over all things to the Church, which is His Body, the fulness—*i.e.*, the completing of Him that filleth all in all.' To a careless reader this means little more than a reiteration and a summing up of what he had said in *I. Cor.* xii.; but in that chapter he is thinking of the way in which the whole body of Christians co-operate with Christ, and with one another. He goes further in *Ephesians*, thinking of the Church as the complement of Christ, inseparable from Him in Heaven and in Earth. Further on he changes his metaphor and speaks of the Church as the Bride of Christ. This mystical Marriage sanctifies all marriages. Husbands are to love their wives, as Christ loves the Church. But there is here no change of thought, since he thinks of marriage as uniting men and women in one body. Whether we regard the Church as the Body or as the Bride of Christ, the idea of its Unity is equally implied. This is an addition to, but not a modification of, Paul's gospel. He still speaks of Predestination, Redemption, and the rest. He still insists upon the Divine Purpose

'to sum up all things in Christ.' But there is a difference between the making all men alive in Christ, and the gathering together of all things in one. In the first we are told of God's will to save all; but in the second there is the added idea of the one Church as the method of this universal salvation. In his missionary days, Paul was building up a number of churches. In his Captivity he was welding them into one Catholic Church. The antithesis must not, however, be pushed too far. Even in the earlier Epistles the conception of the one Organization was beginning, and, to the last, the distinction of the various churches remained. Similarly Paul never faltered in his conviction of the need of every individual soul for forgiveness, and for direct access to God and His Righteousness. We were slaves to sin, and as a slave's liberty must be bought by due payment, so our liberty has been bought by the Blood of Jesus. Here, again, the analogy must not be unduly pressed. In the case of a slave, the price of liberty has to be paid to the owner. In the case of the sinner, the old owner to whom we were subject is regarded sometimes as the Devil, sometimes as the World, sometimes as the Flesh, the Law, Death, or vaguely, Sin. To speak of the price as paid to any of these would be grotesque, but not so grotesque as to suppose that it was paid to Our Father. For the whole allegory turns on the idea of deliverance from a slave-owner; and we can imagine Paul's feelings if he had been told that our former owner, from whom we needed to be delivered, was the Heavenly Father. On the contrary, he insisted that 'God, being rich in mercy, for His great love, wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, quickened us together with Christ' (ii. 4).

It is difficult to say whether the Sealing by the Holy Ghost in i. 13 and *II. Cor.* i. 22 refers to something purely spiritual, or is connected with either Baptism or the Laying-on of Hands. Probably in *Corinthians* it is mainly spiritual, but in *Ephesians* the Apostle has all the three ideas in his mind. In both cases the Sealing

is spoken of as an earnest—*i.e.*, a pledge—of the ultimate and complete redemption. But in *Corinthians* Paul is thinking of individual sanctification, while in *Ephesians* he speaks of 'the redemption of God's own possession'; that is to say, the whole Church. The idea of the visible rites would therefore be combined with that of the inward spiritual grace. The latter is still the essential thing, 'for by Grace have ye been saved, through Faith.' But now we have the added notion of a reconciliation '*in one body*, unto God through the Cross.' The old moral follows. If we are saved by God's Grace, there is the more need that we should be righteous. But the lesson is now taught with a difference in the form of an obligation to be 'fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the chief corner-stone.' Notice the continued prominence of the Church. It is a City, a Household, a Holy Temple. It is built upon the foundation of an Ordained Ministry of Prophets and Apostles. These represent two very different classes. The Apostles were missionaries and rulers. The Prophets were critics, who spoke under Divine Guidance; Seers, with insight into God and Man; revealers of mysteries. Two other kinds of officials are mentioned further on, namely, Evangelists and Pastors. The Pastors were ministers attached to a local church, to shepherd a particular flock. The Evangelists were missionaries sent out either by an Apostle or by a local church. The work for which all the four classes of officials are ordained is 'for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ.' The Apostles and Prophets are directly ordained by God; the Evangelists and Pastors by the laying-on of Apostolic hands. But the names were by no means fixed. In his very next letter, written probably within a few months, Paul talks of 'bishops' and 'deacons.' Possibly the nomenclature differed in different churches, but bishops and deacons may be included among the 'pastors' named in *Ephesians*, as

they were local officials engaged in shepherding and teaching one particular flock. Most probably the details of the organization were still undetermined. The essential thing is that they are building up a Body for Christ which is a living organism. 'In whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into an Holy Temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God.'

In CHAPTER III. the warmth and tenderness of Paul's nature is conspicuously displayed, but there is little fresh light thrown on the development of his theology. He starts a prayer, but its opening words set his mind working in another direction. He thinks of how to him was revealed God's great mystery 'which in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men'—the secret that all men are to be fellow-members of the Body. 'Unto me, who am the least of the saints was this grace given, to preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ . . . to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in the heavenly places might be made known, *through the Church*, the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus.' The opening sentence of the intended petition is never completed. An appeal to the Ephesians is substituted, and then comes a magnificent prayer, ending with the equally magnificent ascription. For English readers it may be noted that the Greek word for *family* is near akin to that for *father*. The Greek word suggested the earthly father, but to Paul it also suggested the Heavenly. The prayer is for strength, through the Divine Spirit; for an indwelling Christ, through faith; and for love as the base of all Christian life. These three things we need in order to apprehend 'the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.'

CHAPTER IV.—The Apostle returns to earth, and, as usual, he presses upon the disciples the importance of homely duties—meekness, lowliness, long-suffering, for-

bearance, love. To a list of Christian virtues, such as Paul is fond of giving, he now adds the idea of Unity in Churchmanship which at this period was so prominent in his mind. Then follow references to the four-fold ministry, growing out of an assertion of Christ's gifts to men. Among these gifts he places the four-fold ministry, which is to build up the Church 'till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.' The Church is viewed not as an end, but as a means to the attainment of that perfect righteousness which Paul never ceases to regard as the rational object of human effort. But the new element in his ideal continually reappears. Not the individual only, but also the Body is to build itself up in love. Then comes the contrast, and we have another of those gloomy pictures that Paul paints of the heathen world 'alienated from the life of God.' He writes as if the world outside the Church was utterly given over to wickedness, 'to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.' We are reminded of what Juvenal and Tacitus had to say, not many years later, and we naturally suspect that all these writers exaggerated the wickedness of the world. Paul seems for the moment to forget his old message that God had not left Himself without witnesses, even in the worst days of Paganism (*Acts* xiv. 17), and that He had written His moral law in the heart of man. Seneca and Epictetus were contemporaries of Paul, and though the Apostle did not know them, he must have met many Pagans to whom his lurid description did not apply. But Paul was so greatly impressed with a sense of the sinfulness of sin, primarily as he found it in his own heart, and secondarily as he saw it in the decaying civilization round about him, that he was carried away to use language which in cooler moments he could hardly have defended. But if we believe that God is the source of all good, we shall accept as literally true the contrast between those who are alienated from Him and those who

are loyal to the Word of God within their hearts. I cannot doubt that Paul would have included among these many people who were outside the Christian Church. His object, in the passage we are considering, is purely practical. He is beseeching his fellow Christians to walk worthily of their calling.

CHAPTER V. begins on the same note. 'Be ye therefore imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love as Christ also loved you.' The whole passage from iv. 26 to v. 6 shows the profoundly ethical spirit in which Paul viewed religion. 'Let no man deceive you with empty words; for because of these things cometh the wrath of God.' 'These things' are coveteousness, foolish talking, and all the works of darkness. 'Walk as children of the Light, for the fruit of the Light is in all goodness and righteousness and truth.' More detailed instruction follows. Wives are to be subject to their husbands as the Church is subject to Christ. Husbands are to love their wives as Christ loves the Church. Paul retains to the last his oriental views concerning the subjection of women; but husbands are not to make their prerogative an excuse for infidelity. They must set before themselves the highest standard of love. Marital relations are to be sanctified by being made a symbol of the most sacred of all relationships, in order that Christ may 'present the Church to Himself, a glorious Church.'

CHAPTER VI. deals in the same spirit with the duties of children and servants. Here, too, the relation requires reciprocity. Slaves are to serve their masters with good will. 'And ye masters, do the same things unto them, and forbear threatening; knowing that both their Master and yours is in Heaven, and there is no respect of persons with Him.' Then follows a stirring appeal to put on the whole armour of God for the battle against the evil one; and a promise that Tychicus shall bring them all the news. The Epistle ends with a benediction.

The *Epistle to the Ephesians* is the most general and the least personal of all Paul's letters. *Romans* comes next to it in these respects; but in this Paul has a special

group of Christians in his mind, though their church is to him an almost unknown body. In *Ephesians*, on the contrary, he is writing to a group of churches in Ephesus, Laodicea, and other Asiatic towns, all of which looked to him as their Apostle. In fact, it is probable that, writing from the Imperial city, he was addressing himself to all the churches of the Empire, even though he only expected the Epistle to be actually delivered to a few. The general character of this letter explains the absence of that personal note which is so conspicuous in Epistles addressed to single churches, with which the Apostle was familiar; whose members he loved individually; with whose dangers he sympathized as if they were his own. We may further notice that this Epistle contains no suggestion that the profession of Christianity had as yet come to be regarded as a crime by the Roman government. The writer throws the responsibility for his imprisonment upon the Jews. The government is only carrying out its legal duties. This fact has an important bearing upon the question of the date and authenticity of the Epistle. An imitator writing after A.D. 68 would hardly have written so; even if he could have attained to the peculiar loftiness of spirit and fervour of style which characterizes the *Epistle to the Ephesians*.

NOTE ON CHAPTER IX

If we divide the Higher Critics into *conservative, moderate,* and *advanced,* we find that many of the 'moderates' and most of the 'advanced' refuse to believe that Paul wrote *Ephesians*. Some reasons for dissenting from this judgment are given in this chapter, but it seems rash to reject the authority of such a combination of experts as Schleiermacher, von Weiszäcker, Renan, de Wette, Schwegler, Hilgenfeld, Ewald, Jülicher, Moffatt, and (though with some doubt) Harnack. No plausible suggestion of an alternative author has been made. He must have been an original genius of strange fervour and profundity; and also a rather unscrupulous plagiarist from *Colossians*. De Wette depreciates

Ephesians as a verbose expansion of *Colossians;* but the place it holds in the hearts of devotional readers seems a sufficient answer to such a judgment. The resemblances between the two Epistles are best accounted for by the supposition that Paul wrote *Ephesians* shortly after *Colossians,* and repeated some of its ideas and expressions, worked up into a more literary form, and permeated with a sort of lyric enthusiasm. There are some peculiarities of style in this Epistle which throw doubt on the Pauline authorship. But the style of *Colossians* forms a connecting link between that of *Romans* and that of *Ephesians* (Peake), and can to a great extent be accounted for by the difference of circumstances between Paul the missionary and Paul the captive. Many of the objections to its authenticity—*e.g.,* the absence of personal messages—disappear on the hypothesis that the Epistle was not specially addressed to Ephesus, but was a circular letter to the churches of 'Asia.' The words 'in Ephesus' are absent from the two oldest manuscripts that have come down to us, and Marcion describes the Epistle as 'to the Laodiceans.' Some curious parallelisms with *I. Peter* and with the Johannine books complicate the problem, which is both literary and psychological. The arguments from alleged references to second century Gnostics apply equally to *Colossians,* and have been spoken of under that heading.

There are references to this Epistle in Clement of Rome, Ignatius, and Polycarp; making it clear that *Ephesians* existed *circa* A.D. 100; though not necessarily in the form which has come down to us.

Among English Commentaries those of T. K. Abbot (I.C.C., 1897); J. A. Robinson (1903); Westcott (ed. Wright, 1906); and Murray (C.G.T., 1914) deserve special attention. See also Gardner, *The Ephesian Gospel* (1915).

CHAPTER X

PAUL'S EPISTLES FROM ROMAN CAPTIVITY—III

To the Philippians. (A.D. 61)

The authenticity of the *Epistle to the Philippians* has been disputed, but is now admitted by most competent critics. Those who still question Paul's authorship of the *Epistle to the Ephesians* accept, for the most part, the letter to the Philippians. In thought and style alike, it is closely connected with the other Captivity Letters; but the exact order of the four is not demonstrable. The balance of evidence places the main part of the *Epistle to the Philippians* last in order. When he wrote this letter, Paul had evidently been for some time a prisoner. He now anticipates a speedy release, or, in less hopeful moods, a martyr's doom. He is also by this time in a position to criticize some of the members of the Roman Church, as he does in none of the other Captivity Letters. None of these points are conclusive, but they all seem to point to a late date. Thus, we should expect the great Apostle to be heartily welcomed by his co-religionists when he first came a prisoner to Rome, and to have reciprocated this welcome with grateful cordiality, even if disputes and opposition afterwards made their appearance. The alternative theory, that he began to criticize and be criticized from the first, is possible but less probable. Many minor indications point in the same direction. The Philippians have several times sent money to ease his captivity, and there has been a considerable interval between such gifts (iv. 10-18). Considering the length and difficulty of journeys between Philippi and Rome, this points to a very considerable

length of time, especially as the first gift was likely to have been sent only after Paul had been already for some time in captivity. No great weight should be given to the use of the names *bishops* and *deacons* for ministers of the Church. These names most likely came gradually into use. They may have been employed at Philippi earlier than elsewhere. And again, it is possible that these terms were in vogue, say at Colosse, even though Paul in writing thither, did not happen to make use of them. Nevertheless, as far as this argument goes, it does indicate a rather later stage in Church development. On the whole, therefore, we will treat this Epistle as the last of the Captivity Letters.

CHAPTER I. opens with a salutation to the saints—*i.e.*, the baptized, at Philippi 'with the bishops and deacons.' Paul thanks God every time that he recollects them, rejoicing at the way in which they have helped his work from the very first, and confident that God will complete His good work in them 'until the day of Jesus Christ.' This is one of the few indications in Paul's later Epistles that the hope of the Second Advent still formed part of his effective religion. Such references were common in the letters to the Thessalonians, and not rare in those to the Corinthians, but they then almost disappear, and when they do occur, they are quite disconnected with any Apocalyptic expectation. They may indeed point simply to a distant Day of Judgment, or to the ultimate triumph of Christ in all hearts.

Paul next tells how his imprisonment has helped on the good cause, by bringing the Gospel under the notice of the Pretorian Guard and others, as well as by encouraging the Roman Christians. Some of these are acting in a fashion that aggravates his bonds, but they too, are in their way, preaching Christ; so that the Apostle is able to rejoice even over them. The character of these assailants is only indicated by the assertion that their motive is 'envy and strife.' Perhaps they were merely annoyed at Paul's pre-eminence. That they are preaching Christ is more important to the Apostle than that

they are attacking him. The Philippians are praying for him; the Spirit is supporting him. Surely attacks will only help forward his salvation. He has complete confidence that he will not be disgraced, and that he will go on glorifying Christ whether by his life or by his death. For to him life is Christ, but death would be gain. The mystical expression 'to live is Christ' implies that Christ is his inspiration, his law, and his aim. How can he wish to lose a life which is so kindled and restrained? Yet he feels that death would bring him still nearer to his Master. It would be a gain to him, but a loss to his beloved followers. Paul had no mock modesty. He had founded and was supervising a dozen churches. He was planning to bestow upon them a visible Unity that should correspond with their Spiritual Unity. He was looking towards Spain, and hoping, no doubt, to do for the western Mediterranean what he had already done for the eastern. He was now able to survey the Empire from its very centre. Why should he conceal from himself or from the Philippians that his death would be a loss? Paul 'the aged' was now beginning to feel himself an old man, and a little tired, especially when he had to deal with strife and jealousies among believers. He feels, at least sometimes, that death would be a gain, but there were still a few years of work for him before his martyrdom. There are signs of depression in this Epistle, but its prevailing tone is one of joy. Paul will gladly live on, if only his disciples will be faithful, believing in Christ and suffering for Him.

In CHAPTER II. Paul earnestly prays that the Philippians will fulfil his joy, loving one another, avoiding party spirit, cultivating humility and unselfishness. Pointing to Jesus as an example of these virtues, he proclaims more clearly than ever that this Jesus preexisted 'in the form of God,' and yet did not count this as a prize to be retained; 'but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant . . . humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, yea, the death of the Cross. Where-

fore also God highly exalted Him.' Here Paul definitely commits himself to what was afterwards called the Athanasian doctrine of the Divinity of Jesus—His Unity of Essence with the Father, and His separate Personality He also treats the Incarnation as an emptying Himself of some of the Divine Prerogatives, a self-limitation. All this was no doubt implied in earlier Epistles, but not in so definite a form. Paul's object is, as usual, ethical, and he only makes these theological statements as a way of enforcing the lessons of unselfishness and humility, by pointing to the great Example. He hastens on to the lesson 'Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you, both to will and work.' They are to avoid murmurings and disputings, to be blameless and harmless, 'as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life, that I may have whereof to glory in the day of Christ'; and then, if Paul is martyred, he will rejoice, and they must share in his joy.

With the exception of Timothy, Paul has nobody whom he can entirely trust, and who may wisely be sent to Philippi to bring back a report on its condition. Timothy, then, he will send, though he can ill spare him; and he hopes that he himself may soon follow. We suspect that Timothy was not only to report upon, but also to regulate and edify, the Church at Philippi. Paul, however, with his usual tact, does not mention this. He will also send Epaphroditus who is to remain at Philippi. He had been a great comfort to the imprisoned Apostle, but his health is very bad, and he is yearning for his home among his beloved Philippians. And so Paul cheerfully bids him depart. He appears about to close the Epistle. 'Finally, my brethren . . .'; but he suddenly takes up a group of subjects. In this there would be nothing strange. Paul's letters were so spontaneous, and his mind so active, that he might well change his intentions, as new thoughts occurred to him. This hypothesis, however, will hardly fit the case, as among the new subjects is one which Paul can never have intended

to omit. The Philippians had sent him money, and he must thankfully acknowledge this. On the whole, the probability is that in what we call the *Epistle to the Philippians*, two distinct fragments, written at different times, have been inserted. In other words, from i. to iii. 1, together with verses 21 to 23 of iv., form a complete letter. The first inserted fragment begins with iii. 2: 'Beware of the dogs; beware of evil workers; beware of the concision.' Such a violent transition is, of course, possible, but very improbable. The dogs cannot be the snarlers already referred to for these were at Rome, not at Philippi. The difficulty is increased by the fact that if this verse had been originally consecutive with verse 1, it should have contained a repetition of something already said. This is implied in 'the same things' of verse 1. A similar argument applies to what follows in iii. 4-6. It is a vindication of Paul's right to 'have confidence in the flesh'—*i.e.*, to have been in all things what Jews as Jews would respect. 'Of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; as touching zeal, persecuting the Church; as touching the righteousness which is in the law, found blameless.' Now it is quite possible that Paul wrote this; but the passage is entirely out of place in this context. It is obviously addressed to Jews who make much of Judaism; whereas the *Epistle to the Philippians* is mainly addressed to converts from heathendom, and to those Jews who frankly accept Gentiles as fellow Christians. The fragment might have been written to such a church, if it had been invaded by men representing Paul as an outsider, hardly better than a Gentile; but it would not be inserted in a letter which makes no reference to such an invasion.

It may next be noticed that it is almost certain that several letters had passed between Paul and the Philippians. The fact that they had frequently sent him money almost proves this. Probably he wrote first of all to report progress after leaving Macedonia. They replied with a gift. He acknowledges it. They send a second

gift which would draw a third letter from the Apostle. Then came the gift specially referred to in chapter iv. I suggest that the first fragment comes from Paul's second letter; the second fragment from the fourth; and that the main Epistle (i. 1 to iii. 1; with iv. 21-23) is a fifth letter. If we attempt hypothetically to reconstruct the correspondence, we get:

(1) Paul writes to report progress.

(2) The Philippians send him money to Thessalonica, and tell him that certain Jews have come among them, disparaging Paul, and especially contrasting his claims with those of the Twelve who are genuine Jews.

(3) Paul acknowledges the gift, and writes the *First Fragment* (iii. 2 to iv. 9), in which he denounces the snarlers; calls them 'of the concision,' as contrasted with the true circumcision (iii. 2, 3); and vindicates his claim to be a true Jew (iii. 4-6). He purposely avoids mentioning the Twelve, as he does not wish to enter into rivalry with them. He goes on to preach his gospel, and ends with a benediction.

(4) Then follow the second gift, its acknowledgement, and the third gift. The Philippian Christians did not preserve the acknowledgements of the first and second gifts. They had no wish to keep a record of their own generosity. But they did keep the First Fragment, for the sake of its valuable distinction between false and true circumcision, for its contributions to Paul's biography, and also, above all, for the grand preaching of the gospel in its later parts.

(5) The acknowledgement in the fourth letter was intermingled with hortatory and biographical matter. It began with a mere acknowledgement, and, perhaps, a mention of the amount given. This was not kept. The portion preserved (iv. 10-20) consequently begins with a 'But.' It is this fragment which we have still to consider.

Second Inserted Fragment (iv. 10-20).—There has evidently been a considerable interval since the last letter. Paul rejoices 'that now at length ye have re-

vived your thought for me' as proved by the sending of the third gift. He knows that it has been 'lack of opportunity,' not lack of consideration, that has caused the delay; and he did not need their money, for his requirements are small. He can enjoy their gifts, but he can also get on quite happily without them. Christ strengthens him in wealth and in poverty alike. But their gift proves their sympathy. They were the first of the churches to send him money. They have sent it once and again. Paul cared little for their money but much for their generosity. They have now made him a rich man, sending by Epaphroditus enough for all his needs. God accepts this their sacrifice, and will 'fulfil every need of yours, according to his riches, in glory in Christ Jesus. Now unto our God and Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.'

(6) Last of all Paul writes the main part of the Epistle, as we have it. This was naturally cherished with the two valuable fragments of the earlier letters. Ultimately some scribe tried to work the three precious documents into one, by inserting the two fragments before the final benediction.

NOTE ON CHAPTER X

The chief attacks on the Pauline authorship of *Philippians* were made before 1878. The tendency during the last forty years is to defend its authenticity. Clemen, Dibelius, Bousset, and others have shown that the references in ii. 6, etc. apply to doctrines of the first century and earlier. But if *Philippians* be accepted as Paul's, it becomes harder to reject *Colossians* and *Ephesians*. The common features of the three Epistles point to a common authorship, and to a proximity of date. The theory that at least two of them were written during Paul's captivity at Cæsarea (*cf. Acts* xxiii. to xxvi.) and not from Rome, though plausibly defended by several recent scholars has not found general acceptance. The references to Rome in *Philippians* seem clear.

That *Philippians* is composite is recognized by Hausrath, Bacon, Kirsop Lake, Paulus, and many others. The attempts

to prove its unity seem to me quite unsatisfactory. The suggestion of Ewald and Reuss that after writing the first two chapters, Paul received some fresh information about Judaizers, and consequently changed his tone and made a sort of fresh start, is improbable in itself, and only meets one of the many objections to the unity of the Epistle. But it must be admitted that the various suggestions as to how the Epistle should be broken up are purely hypothetical. The attempts of Baur, Schwegler, and Volkmar to represent *Philippians* as a second century effort to reconcile the Judaic and anti-Judaic parties in the Church are extraordinarily ingenious, but the ingenuity is far fetched and unconvincing.

English Commentaries: Vincent (I.C.C., 1897); Kennedy (Ex. G.T., 1903); Maurice Jones (W.C., 1918).

CHAPTER XI

THE PASTORAL EPISTLES—I

THE question whether the Epistles to Timothy and Titus were written by Paul is one of extreme difficulty. They were certainly attributed to him at a very early date. Tertullian, writing about A.D. 140, wonders that Marcion should reject the letters, plainly implying that at this date their authenticity was unquestioned, except by a heretic who had the strongest reason for objecting to Epistles which condemned many of his doctrines. Now most of the arguments against the Pauline authorship imply that the Pastorals were written *long* after the death of the Apostle. They are supposed to contain references to second-century heresies and second-century systems of ecclesiastical organization. This seems plainly negatived by Tertullian's remarks. If these Epistles were written in the second century, how could the learned Tertullian, writing in A.D. 140, be astonished that anyone should doubt their authenticity? There are references to the Pastoral Epistles by Clement (*circa* A.D. 100) and in Polycarp and Ignatius (*before* A.D. 117). These authors do not actually name Paul as the writer of the Epistles, but their remarks seem to prove that parts at least of the Pastorals, were written in the first century.

On the other hand, there are serious difficulties in the way of attributing these letters to Paul. They cannot have been written before A.D. 62, and those who uphold the Pauline authorship have been driven to invent the theory that Paul was liberated, that he resumed missionary work for two or three years, and that he was then again imprisoned, and ultimately martyred. This is only an hypothesis; but after all, an hypothesis which

explains facts is not to be rejected merely because it is not demonstrable. The truth is that we have no real evidence of any value, as to what happened to Paul in the last years of his life. The probability was that he would be liberated. Christianity was not yet a crime under the Roman Law, and it is difficult to see of what other crime he could be convicted. Paul himself expected a speedy release when he wrote *Philippians* ii. 24 and *Philemon* 22. He was full of hope and readiness for work. In the *Second Epistle to Timothy*, on the contrary, he seems to feel that his race is almost run. He expects a speedy death, probably by martyrdom.

A strong confirmation of the view that the Epistles were written before A.D. 68 is the fact that in that year Christianity was made a capital offence, while there is nothing in the Pastoral Epistles to imply that this was the case at the time when they were written. In fact, passages like *I. Timothy* vi. 1 and *Titus* ii. 5 imply that Christians will not be punished merely for their religion. This represents the situation before A.D. 68. Some crime other than Christianity had to be alleged to secure their condemnation. The coming change is foretold as imminent in *II. Timothy* iii. 12 and 13. Again, Clement of Rome, writing about A.D. 95, implies that Paul visited Spain, or, as he puts it, 'the bounds of the west.' This visit can hardly have taken place before Paul's first imprisonment in Rome. Eusebius says that after two years captivity Paul resumed missionary work, and that he was martyred under Nero on a second visit to Rome. Thus the hypothetical release, the subsequent activity, and the second arrest, though not proved, are not without confirmation. It is begging the question to quote the Pastorals themselves in proof of their being the work of Paul, but it may be noted that the references to his missionary work between A.D. 62 and A.D. 66, are not the sort of thing that a forger would insert. The motive of the latter would be to claim Paul's authority for certain doctrines and a certain ecclesiastical system. He would have no

object in inventing such passages as *II. Timothy* i. 18, iv. 10, 13, 20, *I. Timothy* i. 3, and *Titus* iii. 12 and 13, all of which refer to incidents for which we can find no place in the Apostle's career before his imprisonment at Rome. The objections to the theory of the Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles are as follows:

(1) The Pastorals deal with certain heresies which we do not know to have existed during Paul's lifetime.

(2) The system of Church government implied in the Pastorals, was one which we do not know to have existed in Paul's lifetime, and one which it is difficult to reconcile with what knowledge we do possess of the ecclesiastical systems of the first century.

(3) The Pastorals contain no references to Justification by Faith. They may indeed be said to preach Justification by Works.

(4) The phraseology of these letters is in many respects unlike that of the earlier Epistles of Paul.

(5) The style and grammar show similar differences.

Let us consider these objections in turn.

(1) We have seen that many Gnostic ideas were older than Christianity. It is impossible to determine whether the author of the Pastorals is dealing with any of the full-fledged heresies of the second century. He *might* be familiar with the teaching of Marcion, Montanus, Basilides, or Valentinus, but he is dealing with doctrines incorporated in their system rather than invented by them. Sometimes it is a Judaic heresy that he seems to have in view. We cannot say with any certainty what are the myths and genealogies that he attacks, but he objects to them more because they are frivolous and provocative of barren controversy than because they are false (*I. Tim.* i. 3, 4, *Titus* iii. 9, *II. Tim.* ii. 23). There is no doubt a direct use of the word *gnosis* in *I. Timothy* vi. 20, but *gnosis* meant simply knowledge, and '*gnosis* falsely so called' is an expression that might be applied to any kind of professed knowledge opposed to the writer's own convictions. Similarly as to the attack upon asceticism. It would be quite appropriate in a

second-century document, but not inappropriate to the earlier date. Asceticism is older than Christianity, and was taught in the days of Paul both by Jewish and Gentile teachers. He had attacked it in earlier Epistles, and the fact that he had more or less discouraged marriage might make him more anxious to dissociate himself from teachers of extreme asceticism.

(2) The system of Church government implied in the Pastorals raises considerable difficulties. We know extremely little of the ecclesiastical organization in the later days of Paul's life. We can say pretty confidently that it was still in a fluid condition. Such words as *apostle*, *bishop*, *presbyter*, and the like, had not as yet acquired any fixity of meaning. Many who were not members of the original Twelve are referred to as Apostles. Not only Paul and Barnabas, but Timothy, Silas and others are spoken of by this name. Andronicus and Junias are mentioned as notable Apostles in *Romans* xvi. 7. Itinerant missionaries were called Apostles long after the death of Paul—*e.g.*, in chapter xi. of *The Teaching of the Apostles*. It is generally admitted that the 'bishops' whom Timothy was to ordain were simply Presbyters, and are so called in the *Epistle to Titus*.

Now the letters of Ignatius show that by about the year A.D. 110, a distinction between the two orders was thoroughly established. By that time the title of Bishop was given to an official who discharged *quasi* Apostolic functions, such as were delegated by Paul to Timothy and Titus. Ignatius compares a bishop and his presbyters to God and His Apostles, a change indeed from the days when the two titles were interchangeable. Half a century seems a short time for such a revolution in the ecclesiastical use of the word *bishop*, yet half a century back from Ignatius brings us within the lifetime of Paul, and if we once put the Pastorals into that period the first two objections to the theory of the Pauline authorship of the Epistles disappear.

(3) The absence from the Pastoral Epistles of certain

characteristic Pauline doctrines will only weigh much with those who do not recognize any gradual development in Paul's theology. If we divide his literary career into four periods, we may say that in each there are prominent doctrines, which afterwards passed into the background of his mind. In all the four periods the Incarnation, the Crucifixion, and the Resurrection appear, though with some difference of emphasis. *Thessalonians* and *Corinthians* are dominated by the expectation of the speedy Advent of Messiah. In *Galatians* and *Romans* Justification by Faith is perhaps his most prominent thought. In *Colossians, Philippians,* and *Ephesians* Paul is more concerned with the incorporation of believers in Christ. If none of these are the most conspicuous doctrines in the Pastorals, this by no means proves that the latter are not Pauline. We need not attribute any of these changes entirely to a changed point of view. Every age has its own problems and its own controversies, and in the rapid spread of Christianity among widely different races it was natural that the changes should be specially rapid and call for a constant change of teaching. Again, what was appropriate to a church which Paul knew well might be less suitable to one which he had never visited, and still less appropriate to personal letters intended for the practical guidance of such well-tried Christians as Timothy and Titus. If Paul held as strongly as ever to his belief in the Second Advent and in Justification by Faith, it still does not follow that he would lay the same emphasis on these doctrines as he had done in earlier and more general Epistles. As for the glorification of good works in the Pastorals, it would be easy to quote similar glorification from those Epistles which most strongly insist upon the value of Faith. In fact, as we have seen, the faith glorified by Paul was always a faith bearing fruit in love, and in the sanctification of a heart and mind consecrated to the service of God and man. This is the form of good works glorified in the Pastoral Epistles, especially in opposition to the myths and

the endless genealogies which produce controversies, rather than godly edifying.

Some critics hold that the Pastorals are cold and unspiritual when compared with the 'genuine' Epistles of Paul. 'Orthodoxy,' they say, 'has taken the place of Inspiration.' But the altered circumstances may well explain what change there is. Paul does not need to preach the gospel to Timothy. Any rhetorical exposition of the Eternal Verities would be out of place. It suffices to enumerate them as reminders, and in order that none of the articles of the Creed may be lost sight of. Such enumerations may be sneered at, as mere 'orthodoxy,' but they are not necessarily uninspired. Other critics point to the ecclesiastical spirit of the Pastorals. 'Would the champion of Christian liberty,' they ask, 'have been so much concerned about matters of organization and creed?' But there had always been a conservative side to the mind of the Apostle. It had shown itself in his sanction of slavery and of the subjection of women, as also in his insistence upon Church order, and obedience to Church officials. No doubt the Pastorals show a further development along these lines. Jülicher says that in them 'the Catholic standpoint is reached'; and this view seems very crushing to those who believe that Paul never reached this standpoint. But we have seen him steadily advancing towards it. His loyalty to Christ passed through four stages. First it was loyalty to the King who would shortly come back to reign upon earth. Then it became, above all, loyalty to One Crucified, Who saves us from sin. Thirdly, it became loyalty to an Indwelling Christ—God in us. Lastly, to all these loyalties there was superadded a fourth—a loyalty to the beloved Community which the Apostle regarded as the very Body of his Master. To this he had already attained when he wrote *Ephesians*. The next step was obvious. He set himself the task of organizing the Church—lovingly, gently, but also firmly and methodically. It was not, of course, that he could ever regard the Church as *the* Pillar and Ground of the Truth, as

our English Bible puts it. What the Greek says is '*a* pillar and stay.' We cannot wonder that, in the Pastorals, Paul gave so much time and thought to the right ordering of this beloved community.

(4) Of the un-Pauline phraseology of the Pastorals, much may be accounted for by the change in the subject matter. The churches were no longer in their infancy. Their practical organization necessitated the use of more technical words. There are, however, phrases which cannot be thus accounted for. One of these is the five times repeated expression, 'Faithful is the saying,' which is nowhere to be found in Paul's earlier writings. If we attribute the Pastorals to Paul, we must suppose that, in his later years, he acquired the habit of using this phrase. Curiously enough, it seems impossible to say exactly what he meant by it—whether it refers to what he had just written, or to what he is about to write, or whether it is just thrown in as a sort of pious ejaculation. In *I. Tim.* i. 15 'Faithful is the *logos*' seems to point forwards—'Faithful is the saying, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.' Here Paul was about to utter one of the great Commonplaces of the Faith. Before using the well-worn phrase he tries to emphasize its significance, and to show that he is not using a mere formula. This was specially to be expected in a late epistle, when Christian commonplaces were apt to become vulgarized or conventionalized by repetition. The same may be said of *Titus* iii. 8, except that here the faithful saying seems to be what has just been said, and not what is about to be said. In the other three cases, the faithful sayings appear to be quotations. Thus, in *II. Tim.* ii. 11 the words 'For if we die with Him, we shall also live with Him,' are probably quoted from a Christian liturgy or hymn. Here, again, we see why it was not till his last years that Paul used this expression. Christian hymns and other quotable Christian literature must have had time to grow familiar before they could be quoted, just as sayings once full of fire and warmth would only gradually harden into formulæ. In both

cases alike, we see why Paul would not use the phrase in his earlier Epistles.

Another peculiarity of the Pastorals is that they evince more acquaintance with the gospel story than Paul had previously shown. *I. Tim.* v. 18; *I. Tim.* vi. 17-19; *Titus* i. 15 seem reminiscent of *Luke*, and other passages suggest that the author was acquainted with *Mark* and even with *Matthew*. It is probable that by this time Luke had begun his collection of *logia*, and had brought some of them under Paul's notice. Similarly, *Mark* may have been written in Paul's lifetime, or some of his and some of Matthew's sources of information may well have come under Paul's notice. Here, again, we see that the change would naturally come late. The Fourth Gospel was not written in Paul's lifetime; and there is only one very doubtful case of parallelism with it. A new stress is certainly laid on 'the words of our Lord Jesus Christ' (*I. Tim.* vi. 3); but this is natural if the gospel narrative had only recently come under Paul's notice.

(5) The grammatical peculiarities of the Pastorals have been very elaborately analysed. They seem clearly to prove that if Paul was the author, his style had undergone a considerable change, even within four or five years. After due allowance for the difference between a letter to an individual disciple about his official duties, and a hortatory epistle to churches many of whose members were ignorant or neglectful of the fundamental truths of Christianity, we have to admit that the change is more than we should have expected. All that we can fairly claim is that such changes have sometimes been known to occur in other writers, and within equally short periods. This objection, therefore, remains weighty, but not conclusive.

The bearing of Timothy's age upon the problem of the Pauline authorship of the Epistle is of some importance. Timothy must have been at least thirty-five and, more probably, forty when Paul wrote his first Epistle to him. In that time and country a man of thirty-five would be

regarded as middle-aged. Yet Paul addresses him as 'my true child,' 'my beloved child,' and even speaks of his youth as a difficulty, and warns him against youthful lusts. Timothy was at any rate old in the faith, a tried colleague who had endured much and proved himself fit for the high office to which he was now called. But a forger, writing a fictitious letter to Timothy, would have no motive for turning into a youth the man who was at the head of the important church at Ephesus, and was there to exercise the Apostolic functions of ordaining bishops and deacons. It would probably have been easy enough for him to get at the facts, but if he neglected to do so, he would naturally assign an appropriate age to this eminent prelate. On the other hand, it is possible that the 'aged Paul' who had known Timothy from a child, might continue to regard him as little more than a youth. He might even feel that his beloved child needed paternal guidance and cautions, even though he had proved himself a worthy adult disciple. This seems more probable than that a later writer, to whom Timothy was a saint and a bishop—even a bishop over bishops—would introduce a warning against youthful lusts. Similarly, as to the anxiety expressed concerning Timothy's health, would a forger have invented the advice to take a little wine for his stomach's sake, or the request to bring the cloak, or the reference to Timothy's grandmother? A Defoe might invent such details in order to add verisimilitude to his fiction, but not a first or second century forger.

We will next consider what degree of weight must be given to the fact that the three Pastoral Epistles all *claim* to be the work of Paul. It was undoubtedly a common practice for writers to attribute their own compositions to some eminent author. In some cases there was probably no intent to deceive. A pious disciple sometimes elected, out of his very piety, to suppress his own name and allow all the glory to go to the master whom he felt to be the inspirer, and, therefore, in a sense the real author of the book. But in the case of

these Epistles we have to face the fact that, if they are not the work of Paul himself, they were intended as deceptions. The forger may have been animated by all sorts of excellent motives, by a desire to defend orthodox doctrines or moral conduct, or the unity of the Church. He may have been a pious forger, but he must have been a forger. Such forgeries were fairly common in the early centuries, but I do not know of any that reached any high level of spirituality or of religious genius. The First Gospel was not written by Matthew, but then it makes no claim to such authorship. The Fourth Gospel does not claim to have been written by John, although it may possibly be his work. The *Epistle to the Hebrews* does not profess to have been written by Paul. The fact that later ages attributed the books to these authors has of course nothing to do with our argument. The Apocalypse does claim to have been written by John, but this may be an editorial addition; and it does not assert that 'John' was the Apostle. The claim of the Pastorals to be the work of Paul cannot therefore be brushed aside as of no importance, though it cannot be regarded as conclusive.

We have to ask ourselves whether the internal evidence of these letters—their tone, spirit, and insight—suggests a pious forgery, or indicates that they are the original work of a great religious genius. A comparison of the Pastorals with known forgeries of the first three centuries shows the immense spiritual superiority of the former. If the comparison were extended to the genuine Epistles of sub-apostolic fathers like Ignatius or Polycarp, we should find a similar superiority. Forgers and Fathers alike make a plentiful use of the Pauline letters and of other New Testament books, but they give us mere echoes, sometimes pious, sometimes learned—nothing that in any way corresponds to the very considerable number of striking passages from the Pastorals, which have become household words, by reason of the insight, fervour, solemnity and good sense which they display. The *Second Epistle to Timothy* has been called Paul's Swan

Song, and few who associate it with the personality of the aged prisoner can fail to be deeply moved as they read the quiet earnest words, and realize the fire that glows beneath them—*e.g.*, *II. Tim.* i. 8-11; iv. 6-9. Some critics have been so greatly impressed by this that they admit the genuineness of the *Second Epistle to Timothy*, while denying that of the *First*, and of the *Epistle to Titus*. But the best scholars realize that the three Pastorals must stand or fall together; that they are the work of the same author, be he Apostle or forger. Moreover, it would be easy to quote from any of the three passages which bear the stamp of Paul's personality; passages which are not copies such as a forger might produce by a manipulation of Pauline texts, but which express the old Pauline convictions with the old fervour and originality. If there are also passages which might have been put together by skilful combination of Pauline phrases, we must remember that every author sometimes repeats himself, especially if he is essentially a preacher, and if he dictates his letters instead of writing them. There remains the theory that these Epistles are expansions of three genuine Pauline letters. Against this theory it may be urged that the letters appear too homogeneous for the sort of double authorship which extensive interpolations would imply. The Pastorals must be substantially the work of one single writer, but there may be in them a few later additions. Thus, the instruction that a bishop must not be a novice seems hardly appropriate to apostolic days. Paul himself was a 'novice' at the time when he was organizing many of his churches. Again, the description of *Luke* x. 7 in *I. Timothy* v. 18 as 'Scripture' indicates that this passage is not Pauline.

Jülicher finds in the Pastorals many words for few ideas. 'Of Paul one might say exactly the opposite.'

NOTE ON CHAPTER XI

Among those who dispute the Pauline authorship of one or all of the Pastorals are Holtzmann, Renan, Pfleiderer, von Weizsäcker, von Soden, McGiffert, Moffatt, A. S. Peake, etc. In favour of the Pauline authorship of these Epistles we find Findlay, Hort, Ramsay, Zahn, and most recent conservative critics as well as many of the 'moderates.'

If the Pauline authorship be rejected, *II. Timothy* is probably prior to *I. Timothy* (Holtzmann, Harnack, Schmiedel, Jülicher, Davidson, etc.). This view is mainly based on the fact that *I. Timothy* lays more stress on ecclesiastical organization and creed. Of the three Pastorals *II. Timothy* is the most Pauline in spirit, and its authenticity is for this reason recognized by some who deny that of the other two. Nevertheless internal evidence indicates, if it does not demonstrate, that the three Pastorals are mainly the work of a single author, though there are probably later interpolations. Those who regard the Epistles as composite differ widely in their attempted analyses (Harnack, Moffatt, Bacon, von Soden, McGiffert, Hausrath, Hilgenfeld, etc.). Too much stress should not be laid on such differences. Competent critics may be right in their feeling that a work is composite, and yet fail in their several analyses.

When we compare the vocabulary and style of the Pastorals with those Epistles unquestionably Pauline, we find striking resemblances and also striking differences. It needs great literary tact to determine between the theories (1) that Paul's vocabulary and style were much modified in his later years; and (2) that the resemblances are due to the use of Pauline materials, and the differences to the fact that a later writer has utilized these materials, while introducing much of his own. Differences of circumstances, such as, for instance, the position of the recipients, must be remembered; but after every allowance, we have to face such facts as that in these short Epistles there are one hundred and seventy-one words or phrases not found in Epistles recognised as Paul's.

The attribution of the Pastorals to any date after A.D. 120 or even A.D. 110 seems to me futile; yet their omission from Marcion's list (*circa* A.D. 170), though it may have been due to Marcion's peculiar views, cannot be ignored. On the other

hand, there are what appear to be references to the Pastorals in Polycarp, Ignatius, and Justin Martyr, quite early in the second century. A good case can, however, be made for putting the date between A.D. 80 and A.D. 110, which is of course as fatal to the Pauline authorship as a later date.

A few critics still place the Pastorals within the period dealt with in *Acts* (W. E. Bowen, J. V. Bartlett, Laughlin, etc.), but the arguments on the other side, adduced by Hatch, Holtzmann, Renan, etc., seem to me conclusive. The tradition that Paul was liberated and then visited Spain can be traced back to the second century, and is accepted as at least probable by Harnack, Spitta, Findlay, Lightfoot, Salmon, Zahn, and many other competent critics. The opposite view is well put in Peake's *Critical Introduction to the New Testament.*

With reference to ecclesiastical organization, we may notice that *Ephesians* iv. 11 points to a fourfold ministry of Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, and Pastors, but the division was perhaps theoretical rather than actual. Rulers (Apostles) are necessary. So, too, are men of insight (Prophets) and missionaries to carry on Evangelistic work, and Pastors to minister to Christian congregations. The official division into bishops, priests, and deacons has no relation to this. A bishop might be a prophet, though he very seldom is. He might be a missionary, or most at home in pastoral work. Of the building up of an official local ministry, we note the appointment of 'deacons' at Jerusalem before A.D. 44; 'elders' at Jerusalem in A.D. 44, in Galatian churches in A.D. 48, at Ephesus in A.D. 58; 'bishops' and 'deacons' at Philippi in A.D. 63.

In the Pastoral Epistles we seem to have bishops, elders (presbyters), deacons, widows, and deaconesses; but of these the first two may be identical, and the last two appear to have held only a semi-official position. If so, there is little real advance since the bishops and deacons appointed at Philippi. Of 'bishops' in the modern sense, the earliest are James at Jerusalem—though he is called, not bishop, but Apostle—Timothy at Ephesus, and Titus in Crete. Timothy may have been bishop over a city only, but Titus had authority over the whole of Crete, and Timothy may have had similar authority over all the churches of 'Asia.'

Among English Commentaries deserving of special attention are: Bernard (C.G.T., 1899); E. F. Brown (W.C., 1917); Parry (1920).

CHAPTER XII

THE PASTORAL EPISTLES—II

I. Timothy and Titus: Pauline Parts. (A.D. 64)
II. Timothy. (A.D. 65)

From allusions in the Pastoral Epistles we can form at least a plausible theory as to Paul's itinerary between his supposed release in A.D. 62 and his final arrest in A.D. 65. Apparently he first travelled eastwards into Greece, paying his promised visits to Philippi and Colosse, and thence to Ephesus where he was thwarted by Hymenæus and Alexander (*I. Tim.* i. 20), and ministered to by Onesiphorus (*II. Tim.* i. 16). After a winter (A.D. 62-63) in Crete with Titus, would come the visit to Spain (A.D. 63). In the meanwhile the opposition to Paul in the churches in Asia waxed strong. 'All that are in Asia turned away from me' (*II. Tim.* i. 15). It was probably this opposition that determined him to appoint Timothy and Titus to supervise all the churches of 'Asia' and Crete (*Titus* i. 5 and *I. Tim.* i. 3); while he himself revisited Macedonia and Greece. On this journey perhaps he wrote his first letter to Timothy, and in the same year (A.D. 64), his letter to Titus. His intention had been to return speedily to Ephesus, but he changed his plans and summoned Titus to join him at Nicopolis. There he was again arrested, brought back to Rome, and treated as a malefactor (*II. Tim.* ii. 9). At the trial of his case he had no one to help him (*II. Tim.* iv. 16). Next he wrote his *Second Epistle to Timothy*, saying, 'Take Mark and bring him with thee' (*II. Tim.* iv. 11). 'Do thy diligence to come before winter' (*II. Tim.* iv. 21). But it was too late, and on the twenty-ninth of June, A.D. 65, martyrdom released Paul

from the world he had revolutionized. This reconstruction of the events of the last years of the Apostle's life is hypothetical; but it agrees with most of the references in the Pastoral Letters, and it is not inconsistent with anything in them.

The First Epistle to Timothy

According to our hypothesis, this letter was written soon after the delegation of Apostolic functions to Timothy—functions which were to be exercised throughout the churches of Asia Minor, which was still the chief centre of Christianity, and contained the largest number of Christian congregations, as well as the greatest spiritual activity, both orthodox and heterodox. The problem of the organization of these churches was therefore very urgent.

Chapter I.—Timothy is to fight false teachers, and especially those who are wasting time in idle controversies. The end to be aimed at is 'love out of a pure heart, and a good conscience and faith unfeigned.' 'The law is good if a man use it lawfully.' But it is at best a negative thing for the restraint of evil-doers. Our standard is 'the gospel of the glory of the blessed God'; to which Paul, once a blasphemer and a persecutor, had been converted. Let Timothy carry on the work, fighting against the irreligious and the immoral, two of whom Paul has already 'delivered unto Satan' that they may learn not to blaspheme.

Chapter II.—While praying for all men, we must especially pray for rulers. Paul's persecutions have not shaken his strongly conservative feeling in favour of law and order and government. He again insists upon the subordination of women. 'I permit not a woman to teach.' Whatever Paul had by this time learned of the gospel narrative, he had presumably not heard of the *Magnificat*, with its expression of the Woman's view of God's attitude towards the Mighty and the Oppressed. To him Eve, and not the Mother of Jesus, is the type of womanhood. Yet he saw that woman is saved by child-

bearing, as well as by faith, love, sanctification, and sobriety.

CHAPTER III. deals with the ministry, and lays down the qualifications for ordination. Paul begins with 'bishops,' using the word in its original sense of *overseer*. He probably intended that each congregation should have an overseer, with one or more deacons as subordinate ministers. The overseer was apparently called *bishop* in 'Asia,' but *presbyter* or *elder* in Crete. It is inconceivable that if there had been presbyters, as distinct from bishops, in 'Asia,' Paul would have absolutely ignored them. The needs of itinerant missionaries are probably in the Apostle's mind when he asserts that a bishop should be 'given to hospitality.' More doubtful is the exact significance of the insistence that a bishop must be 'the husband of one wife.' There has been much dispute as to whether this means that an overseer must be a married man, or that he must not marry twice, or that he must be free from illegitimate sexual relationships. The first of these interpretations is the natural and obvious one. No doubt it implies that Paul's views on matrimony had been modified since he wrote the Epistles to the Corinthians, and of this we have plenty of other evidence in the Pastoral Epistles. It is easy to see why the overseers should be married men. Their duties of exercising hospitality and setting an example to heads of families are strongly insisted upon. An unmarried overseer would be at a disadvantage in the former, and unqualified for the latter. There are serious objections to the alternative interpretations. It is inconceivable that Paul should forbid polygamy in a bishop in such a way as to imply that he did not object to it in an ordinary Christian. It seems impossible to regard his words as directed against sexual relations outside matrimony; and although he may possibly have objected to second marriages, he would hardly have mentioned such an objection in so casual and unexplained a fashion. No doubt, if the Epistle be regarded as a second century document, it is difficult to

believe that the marriage of bishops would be insisted upon; and by that time objections to second marriages had arisen. Thus, the interpretation of this passage must partly depend upon the date which we adopt. Another qualification of an overseer is that he must have 'good testimony from those that are without.' This is apparently intended as a security against hypocrites, highly thought of in the congregation for their preaching and professions, but unable to impose upon the outside world. The qualifications for deacons are very similar, except that in their case there is no allusion to hospitality. Paul then digresses into a glorification of the Church as a pillar and stay of the Truth; and of the Church's Master, Who was manifested in the flesh, and justified in the spirit.

CHAPTER IV. begins with a denunciation of those who listen to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. Such men are 'branded in their own conscience.' As usual it is the combination of doctrinal error with moral wickedness which rouses Paul's indignation. We have no means of checking the charges brought against false teachers in the New Testament, but there is no doubt that in the next century heresy of doctrine was often combined with immorality, both taught and practised. It may well have been so in the first century; in fact it is hard to understand the language which Paul uses, except on this hypothesis.

Timothy is then urged to set an example in manner of life, 'in love, in faith, in purity.' He is to read, to teach, to meditate. He must not neglect the gift given him by prophecy, with the laying-on of the hands of the presbytery. This illustrates the importance of the part played by prophets in the life of the early church. They spoke as the spirit moved them, interrupting divine service with their messages. At the ordination of Timothy there had been some prophetic message to which Paul more than once refers, though without explaining its purport. His ordination was by the laying-on of the hands, not of the Apostles only, but also of a

group of presbyters. We do not know whether this was a common practice. The instructions to Timothy do not suggest that he should seek such co-operation. Probably the bishops and deacons were elected by the local church, and then ordained by the laying-on of hands; but it seems to be implied that Timothy had a veto, and was expected to exercise it.

CHAPTER V.—Timothy's authority is to be exercised in no formal official or despotic way. It should be paternal, filial, or brotherly, according to the age and standing of those with whom he is dealing. The case of widows is then considered. Apparently some of them are to be recognized as church officials; but those who have children should attend to them, and must not be allowed to devote themselves wholly to church work. Those who neglect their own families are worse than infidels. The younger widows would do well to marry again, and to bear children and attend to their households. If they remain unmarried and become professional church workers, they are likely also to become gossips and busybodies. The recommendation of second marriages to widows makes it more improbable that Paul meant to forbid the remarriage of overseers. The latter are to be adequately remunerated for their preaching, as well as for their other work. The implication is that the prime duty of a 'bishop' is overseeing. If teaching is also undertaken, it should be paid for. Secret accusations against bishops are not to be listened to, and if these officials have to be rebuked, it had better be done in public. Then Timothy is so solemnly warned against partiality, hastiness, and participation in other men's sins, that we wonder if the Apostle is speaking of spiritual dangers to which he believed his 'dear child' specially liable. The affectionate advice to drink wine on account of his physical infirmities may be introduced here to soften the hints of besetting temptations.

CHAPTER VI. opens with Paul's usual teaching as to the duties of masters and servants. Then we have fresh denunciations of false teachers and a warning against the

love of money and other sins. 'But thou, O man of God, flee those things, and follow after righteousness, goodness, faith, love, patience, meekness.' Once more we find ourselves in doubt as to whether a hint is intended. Had the Apostle discovered a growing love of money in his disciple? If so, we need not suppose that it was more than a germ. It seems clear that, on the whole, Paul believed in and trusted Timothy, even if he detected tendencies in him which had to be guarded against. The eloquent charge ends with the phrase 'Grace be with you,' the 'you' being plural. It reads as if the Apostle had suddenly forgotten that he was writing to Timothy and not to a number of disciples. Perhaps the passage was interpolated by some later writer. This would strengthen the suspicion of other interpolations. An epistle which dealt with church organization and denounced heresies would be specially liable to additions by various pious people, anxious to bring it up to date, and make it throw light upon contemporary problems. If we read the Epistle carefully, with this idea in our minds, we find several passages which look like interpolations; iii. 11, iv. 1-5, v. 17-20, and vi. 17-21 are specially suspicious, because they interrupt the order of thought, or because they include repetitions which seem to be introduced for the sake of some added words. But if these are interpolations, the style and vocabulary of the Epistle has been very skilfully copied; and it is possible that these passages were really parts of the original that have in some way become displaced.

Titus

Titus may probably be dated immediately after *I. Timothy*. This explains the resemblance between the two letters. Both are written to faithful friends and disciples who have been placed by Paul in similar positions of authority over groups of churches. Both are largely occupied with the duties of a man who holds

such a position, and especially of one who ordains overseers and deacons. Naturally there are repetitions. Whatever may be the meaning of the rule that an overseer should be the husband of one wife, it is evident that Paul attached great weight to it, as it is laid down in both Epistles. Again, in the *Epistle to Titus* we find the same mixture of personal and pastoral elements. It is at once a private letter to a dear friend, and an official communication to one to whom very important functions are delegated. The official portion is occupied with questions of organization, discipline, and doctrine; and with the treatment meet for the faithful and the unfaithful. Yet the various points are taken up and dropped again in an informal fashion, more suggestive of a personal than of an official communication. A forger would presumably have written with an object, and have made his points far more definitely. We ask in vain what was the exact controversial purpose of the supposed forger, and why it is so vague, and so continually interrupted by personal references. If the object was verisimilitude, the references would surely have been to persons and incidents that could be verified from *Acts*.

Titus had been twice sent as Paul's representative to Corinth, and had there had to deal with very great difficulties. We are, therefore, not surprised to find him entrusted with the oversight of the churches in Crete. He was probably a more efficient coadjutor than Timothy, since Paul displays far less anxiety as to how he will discharge his duties. There are fewer personal warnings, even if we disregard as doubtful the hints as to Timothy's moral dangers, to which we have alluded.

The dissensions among later Christians about what is called the Threefold Ministry, have confused rather than elucidated what is said in the Pastorals as to the apostolic organization of the ministry. The Epistles evidently imply that the threefold system existed in ' Asia ' and in Crete, but whether as a temporary arrangement only, is less certain. Timothy and Titus occupied positions

more or less analogous to that of a mediæval monarchical bishop. Under them stood the class to which the name of bishops was sometimes given, but which was practically identical with presbyters or elders. These bishops corresponded roughly to the priests of later ages. Under them came the deacons. Whether this system can best be described as a threefold or a twofold ministry depends altogether upon whether we choose to include Timothy and Titus in the organization.

Titus is to appoint elders in every city. There is no hint of popular election, such as probably existed in 'Asia.' The Cretans were a comparatively barbarous people—'liars, evil beasts, slow bellies'—as their own countryman had declared. An overseer must be 'blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly.' It seems hard that the sins of the children should thus be visited upon the fathers, but Titus has to deal with disorderly folk, and a failure to manage his own family would suggest a man who lacked that disciplinary ability which a Cretan overseer was likely to need. Similarly, the word 'blameless' suggests not only innocence, but the being above suspicion. Titus is to take into consideration a man's reputation, as well as his real character, and his ability 'both to exhort and to convict the gainsayers.' These gainsayers are then described in words which remind us again of *I. Timothy*, except that rather more prominence is now given to the Judaic character of much of the false teaching. As usual, ethical considerations predominate. 'To the pure all things are pure; but to them that are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; but both their mind and their conscience are defiled.' Once more it is those heresies which lead to moral laxity that the Apostle most fiercely denounces. Then come practical directions to old and young, male and female, masters and servants. Titus is to give advice, and to act accordingly; in all things showing himself an ensample of good works. There is Paul's usual combination of practical detail with lofty idealism and Christian enthusiasm;

the same high standard, combined with the old conviction that we can do nothing except by the Grace of God Who 'saved us through the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.' The combined reference to the sacrament of Baptism and the spiritual renewal, is of course characteristic of Paul's later theology, in which the Church is thought of as the Body of Christ, and not merely as a collection of individuals. The salvation and sanctification of individuals was still the Apostle's chief object; but this could only be done by their ceasing to be mere individuals. Through membership of a society, the Christian virtues were to reach their highest expression, and the Master's spirit was to be fulfilled in them.

The Second Epistle to Timothy

The scene has changed. Paul's active ministry has again been interrupted. Once more he is a prisoner at Rome, but not in the comparatively light bondage in which he wrote his earlier group of Captivity Letters. He is now in chains, and he is not upheld by the old confident hope of a speedy release. His race is nearly run, and he looks forward calmly to martyrdom. Yet the thought of his unfinished work, and anxiety about the future of the churches he has founded, dim the joy which he derives from the conviction that his rest is nearly won. Naturally his heart turns to Timothy, his beloved if sometimes erring disciple; and to Ephesus and the neighbouring congregations, to whom he had written some of his most affectionate and profoundly moving Epistles. His latest information about them had not been cheering. False doctrines bearing fruit in unchristian conduct are still prevalent, and apparently growing stronger. And what about Timothy? As we read the first two chapters the thought forces itself upon us that Paul had discerned a strain of timidity and weakness in this much loved disciple. 'Unceasing is my remembrance of thee in my supplications night and day

. . . reminded of the unfeigned faith that is in thee; which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and, I am persuaded, in thee also. For the which cause I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee, through the laying-on of my hands. For God gave us not a spirit of fearfulness, but of power and love and discipline. Be not ashamed therefore of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me, his prisoner; but suffer hardship with the gospel.' There seems to be a hint here that Timothy is shrinking from hardships, that he is giving signs of fearfulness; that he is not exercising discipline as Paul would have him exercise it. Paul is 'persuaded' of Timothy's faith —but why only 'persuaded'? Why must Timothy be warned not to be ashamed of the testimony, or of Paul himself? Even the succeeding insistence upon the glorious character of the gospel would hardly have been necessary if there had been no signs of faltering in Timothy.

Then comes the obscure statement that 'all that are in Asia' had turned from Paul. This probably means that the Apostle had applied to some of his Asiatic disciples for help, or at least asked them to visit him in his captivity, and that none of them had complied with his request. It is hardly credible that all the Asiatic congregations had turned against Paul and his doctrine, but it is quite likely that the lonely prisoner had made an appeal to a number of disciples, and that none of them had responded. Two are specially mentioned, and are contrasted with Onesiphorus, who was apparently now dead. 'He oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; but when he was in Rome he sought me diligently and found me. The Lord grant unto him to find mercy of the Lord, in that day.' Some Protestant critics, disturbed by the prayer for Onesiphorus, have tried to prove that he may not have been dead when Paul prayed for him; but the balance of evidence is so strong, that his death could never have been doubted, except for its controversial significance. For our

present purpose it is only necessary to say that the memory of Onesiphorus is apparently invoked as an example for Timothy.

CHAPTER II. accordingly begins: 'Thou, *therefore*, be strengthened. . . . Suffer hardship with me as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier on service entangleth himself with the affairs of this life.' Once more we seem to read between the lines a tactful hint. The cumulative force of such passages can hardly be resisted. Yet Paul's love for Timothy was undimmed, and there is reason to think that it had its reward after the Apostle's death, and that the disciple deserved his subsequent canonization. This chapter, however, is occupied less with the personality of Timothy than with insistence upon his continued duty to ordain faithful ministers, and to fight false teachers whose 'profane babblings will eat as doth a gangrene.'

A special heresy is next referred to—namely, that the Resurrection is already past—a caricature of Paul's own doctrine that Christians have died to sin, and risen again to righteousness. This mystical doctrine was not, of course, intended to supersede the belief in a future resurrection; but it could with some plausibility be used for this purpose. Paul answers by an argument which would have no force unless these false teachers were also defenders of immorality, and taught that truly enlightened Christians are free from moral as well as other obligations; for his answer is the characteristic pronouncement: 'Let everyone that nameth the Name of the Lord depart from unrighteousness.' It is as if he said: I will not discuss theological points with those whose very lives and teachings are their confutation. 'The Lord's servant must not strive, but be gentle towards all, apt to teach, forbearing in meekness, correcting them that oppose themselves.' Years and experience had made Paul gentler, less eager for controversy, more willing to trust to the example of a Christian temper. We find that he makes here no attempt to deal controversially with the only specific heresy that he mentions

as existing among those with whom Timothy had to deal.

Very little is told us about the nature of the other heresies. The author evidently assumes that his correspondent needs no particulars. A forger, animated by controversial intentions, would surely have been more precise about the doctrines he was attacking. Similarly, he would hardly have invented the hints about Timothy's weaknesses. To such a one Timothy would be a saint to be honoured, rather than a disciple to be warned.

Chapter III. anticipates a great development of evil, a terrible moral decline, such as apocalyptic writers had foretold for 'the last days,' with added details, based no doubt upon reports brought to the captive Apostle of abuses in the various churches. It is terrible, almost incomprehensible, to Paul that professing Christians should be 'lovers of pleasure, rather than lovers of God.' He has been told of men 'that creep into houses and take captive silly women,' who are 'ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.' It was a time of intellectual ferment, accompanied with dabblings in foolish speculations. The partial emancipation of oriental women in the early centuries of the Roman Empire naturally led to much misuse of ill-digested knowledge and of new opportunities. Every plausible charlatan would get a temporary following, and would then be deserted for a more plausible or, at least, a newer teacher. 'Evil men and impostors shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But abide thou (Timothy) in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of. . . . From a babe thou hast known the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.' The aged Apostle has not swerved from his loyalty to the Old Testament books. They still seem to him the best preparation for faith in Jesus, because their insistence upon righteousness is a constant security against the vagaries of those who regard religion

as a matter of myths and genealogies and *gnosis*, falsely so called. Scripture could be misused, but it remains 'profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction, which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work.'

CHAPTER IV. solemnly repeats the old instructions to Timothy. He must be instant in season and out of season. 'For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn unto fables. But be thou sober in all things.' The prominence given to sobriety, moderation, and the like had always been characteristic of Paul, even in his most fervent days; but he seems to feel more acutely the need of such qualities in the crisis that is at hand. The crisis is threefold; growing out of the spread of false doctrine, the persecution which Paul sees is about to burst upon the Church, and the fact that he himself has little longer to live, and is already a prisoner unable to do much—'for I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come.' Then at length we reach what was perhaps the original motive of this Epistle—Paul's yearning to see Timothy once more. Demas has forsaken him. Crescens and Titus have been sent to Galatia and Dalmatia. Only Luke is with him. 'Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me.' 'Do thy diligence to come before winter.' Such is the old man's last appeal. Between the two petitions come a series of rather disconnected sentences. From one of these we gather that Paul has already been once on trial and that no man helped him, but that the Lord stood by him and delivered him out of the mouth of the lion, but we have no means of saying whether this trial took place during the first or the second imprisonment; or why no one helped the accused. Another difficulty arises out of the fact that Paul sends greetings from various disciples, although he had previously asserted that only Luke was with him. This

difficulty would not be lessened if we attributed the Epistle to a forger. A man clever enough to write the Epistles would surely have avoided such an obvious contradiction. Probably the Epistle was written in prison under great difficulties, and at the last rather hastily. Sentences would be jotted down at odd moments, with little thought of their context. 'Only Luke' may mean that Luke was the only member of the old band of missionaries. The disciples who send greetings are probably new converts, as they are not mentioned elsewhere in the Bible. From the point of view of a man yearning for his loved ones, they did not count.

Then came the end. Paul had turned a Jewish sect into a universal religion. He had founded churches and written masterpieces. He had been 'ever a fighter.' Now, at length, the executioner's sword brought him peace.

NOTE ON CHAPTER XII

The Note on Chapter XI. applies largely also to Chapter XII. A few words may be introduced on the general question of the Jewish and Christian habit of attributing one man's work to another.

(1) The general tendency to group a class of writings round a great man is conspicuous in the Old Testament. Thus any legislation would be attributed to Moses; any Psalms to David; any Wisdom literature to Solomon. Nothing in the New Testament corresponds closely to this practice, which was only likely to arise in very primitive and naïve ages.

(2) Jewish Apocalypses were generally attributed to some great hero of the past—Enoch, Daniel, Moses, the Patriarchs, etc. This example was followed by Christians of the second and later centuries, who usually attributed their Apocalypses to an Apostle. The Johannine Apocalypse can hardly be included under this head, inasmuch as it makes no claim to be the work of the Apostle, which it would almost certainly have done, if it were deliberately pseudonymous.

(3) The pious practice of disciples attributing their own words to a master may be illustrated by the way in which Plato attributes his own ideas to Socrates. It is impossible to

dogmatize as to whether this practice is exemplified by any of the New Testament books. *Matthew* does not in itself claim to be the work of Matthew, but it is conceivable that the author, basing his book upon the *logia* of the Apostle, professed to be telling the Gospel according to Matthew. It is difficult to suppose that it was in this spirit that an unknown writer of the Pastorals or of *Ephesians* attributed his work to Paul. If the Epistles were not Paul's, we must include them in the next group of pseudonymous writings.

(4) Deliberate deception was undoubtedly the motive of the attribution to Apostles and other celebrities, of many writings of professed Christians in the second and following centuries. The motive of the deception might be creditable or the reverse. It might be done in the interests of orthodoxy or piety, but it was hardly reconcilable with Christian veracity, and therefore is clearly distinguishable from (1), (2), and (3). Allowing for the aberrations of the human conscience, and the varying standards of morality in different ages, we need not deny piety and morality to such forgers. Nevertheless, I consider that there is a strong antecedent probability that a work which deliberately makes a false claim to apostolic authority in the supposed interests of religion, would not manifest a very high degree of spirituality.

(5) A distinction must be drawn when the author is using Apostolic materials. Take the hypothesis that *James* consists almost wholly of genuine fragments, which an editor has put together, and issued as a letter from James. Here no idea of deception need enter. According to modern standards the practice would be blameworthy, just as we should blame a modern historian for inventing speeches and putting them into the mouths of his characters. But we do not accuse Thucydides of mendacity for doing this. It is a question of literary and historical scrupulousness, in which we can only expect a man to conform to the standard of his age. If a later writer built up the Pastorals mainly from genuine Pauline fragments, we could hardly place him in our fourth class, even if he made additions of his own which he conceived to be according to the mind of Paul. Moreover, the spirituality of the Pastoral Epistles might be found in the genuine fragments, but not in the additions.

There seems to me, therefore, a strong *a priori* probability

against the Pastorals falling into class (4); but not against their falling into class (5). The same argument applies to *Ephesians,* and is a legitimate ground for regarding *II. Peter* as at least containing Petrine elements.

(6) If the author of the Fourth Gospel was recording recollections which were highly coloured by his own expressions and thoughts, extending over many years; if he also attributed to his Master, teachings which he believed that Master had inspired in him; no charge of deception can be implied, even though a modern writer might have felt it his duty to discriminate with more care. Again, if he was using not recollections but traditions, similar considerations apply. Our judgment, however, becomes very different if we regard the Gospel as a conscious invention, a beautiful romance masquerading as biography.

CHAPTER XIII

THE GENERAL EPISTLES—I

James (A.D. 28 to A.D. 63). Jude (A.D. 68)

Authorship Disputed

We deal next with a type of Epistle which cannot as a rule be dated with even the moderate degree of certainty to which we have hitherto attained. The so-called General Epistles stand in a class by themselves. When for instance Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, his letter was a real letter, addressed to definite people and written with a definite object. It would be carried by a messenger to a particular church, and read aloud to the assembled congregation. Similarly, a letter addressed to several churches—*e.g.*, *Galatians*—would be carried round by messengers to some or all of those churches, and there read aloud. But when we are asked to believe that James, the Bishop of Jerusalem, wrote a letter, not to some particular church or churches but to Christians in general, or 'to the twelve tribes which are of the Dispersion,' all sorts of difficulties arise. In an age of printing, such a letter could be published as a pamphlet, or circulated by the Press; but when we realize the conditions of the time, we ask how a general epistle was to reach the Christian public. No messenger could carry it round to the hundreds of churches, separated by hundreds of miles of difficult travelling. Whether the 'twelve tribes which are of the Dispersion,' to whom *James* is nominally addressed, are scattered Jews or scattered Jewish Christians, the same difficulty arises. Suppose, next, that James or Peter or John really decided to issue a document of this general character. It ought to contain internal evidence of its objects and authorship. James,

for instance, might decide to set forth his fundamental ideas in a general form, for the benefit of some set of Christians; but nothing could be more unlike such a proclamation than the disconnected remarks, some of them no doubt very suggestive and profound, which make up the so-called *Epistle of James*.

A further difficulty is raised by the question why such a document should be put into epistolary form. There may be a solution of this and other difficulties, but the commentators have failed to provide what can be regarded as a plausible explanation, and in some cases it seems more reasonable to adopt one of the following alternatives:

Firstly, it is possible that such epistles are not genuine. Some bold writer may have written in order to promulgate ideas of his own, under the authority of the august name of James or Peter or John. Such a suggestion is not to be indignantly repudiated without examination. Just as some Wisdom Books were put forth as Solomon's, some Psalms as David's, some Pentateuchal writings as the work of Moses, so it is conceivable that Epistles may have been issued under the great names of Apostles or bishops. There might be no intention to deceive. The adoption of a famous name might even be a mark of respect. A disciple might use the name of his teacher with an honest feeling that he owed whatever knowledge or insight he possessed to him. The 'Mosaic' writings were probably all regarded as genuine developments of the work of the great Lawgiver. Any Psalmist might regard himself as continuing the work of the sweet singer of Israel; any Wisdom writer as expanding the wisdom of Solomon. On the other hand, we have plenty of evidence that forgery was often committed in the interests of some heresy. A careful examination, however, of such Epistles as James's makes it difficult to believe that they can be attributed either to pious discipleship or to deliberate deception.

The other alternative, which is the one adopted in this chapter, is that some of the General Epistles consist

mainly of genuine writings of the authors to whom they are ascribed, but that they have been thrown into epistolary form, usually after the death of the author, by the agency of a sort of literary executor. He would be dealing with precious material and would arrange it in the form of an Epistle and provide it with a superscription. The Epistle would be, so to speak, a message from the grave, from the dead master who, being dead, yet spoke, to the whole Church or to some group of churches. James, as the head of the Jerusalem Church, would be represented as speaking to the twelve tribes dispersed throughout the world—*i.e.*, to all Jews who had become Christians and were scattered throughout the Empire. One great advantage of this alternative is that it allows due weight to traditions which are too vivid and too strong to be summarily rejected. Of course, it is not necessary to assert that this general principle determines the authorship of all General Epistles, without any need of further examination. We shall see, in fact, that it does not actually apply to them all. Each Epistle must be dealt with separately, but there is a general presumption in favour of the view that most of the disputed Epistles in their present form are largely if not completely the work of those authors to whom tradition has ascribed them, though they may often have been edited and brought into their present form by a literary executor.

In the case of *James*, this presumption is particularly strong. The traditional view is that this James was a 'brother of the Lord'; one of those brethren who would not believe in the claim of their great Brother, and even thought that He was 'beside himself.' This may explain why Jesus passed over His own brethren, when, from the Cross, He confided His mother to John. But we are told that after His Resurrection He appeared to James, and that James, presumably converted by his Risen Brother, was quickly promoted to the leading position of the Church in Jerusalem; partly perhaps on account of his relationship to the Lord, but chiefly no

doubt on account of his piety, wisdom, and insight. If such a man left written records behind him, they would naturally be published, and perhaps worked up into an Epistle. Some of the fragments might well have been written before his conversion to Christianity; but if they seemed consistent with the new religion, if, moreover, they were inspiring and suggestive, they would not be on that account omitted, even if the literary executor was acquainted with their date.

Now one of the most remarkable features of this Epistle, as we have it, is the absence of definite Christian doctrine. It is almost inconceivable that James should have written a General Epistle after his conversion, and yet have introduced into it no allusion to the Incarnation, Atonement, Crucifixion, Resurrection, Ascension, or even to the Messiahship of Jesus. On the other hand, the constant use of phrases which seem to be suggested by Sayings of Jesus, makes it probable that the author was familiar with the teaching of the Master. A 'brother of the Lord' who did not believe in His claims, but who lived in constant touch with Him in the home at Nazareth, seems just to supply the difficult combination that we need. The Epistle, on this assumption, would consist mainly of observations written by a Jew who was familiar with the Hebrew Wisdom Books, and also with the Sayings of Jesus. Some passages, especially those relating to Justification by Works, would have been written after James became a Christian. The whole might have been brought together and put into epistolary form by the editor, who probably neither knew nor cared about the order in which the fragments were written. Many small points confirm this theory. The early Christians could scarcely have been told 'Ye have despised the poor,' but the words might well have been written to prosperous Jewish communities of the Dispersion, before James became a Christian. Again, it is most unlikely that a Christian would refer to a Christian congregation as a 'synagogue,' while a Jew, writing of a Jewish assembly, would naturally do so. On this

assumption it is, of course, impossible to date the actual *writing* of the *Epistle of James*. Much of it would be before A.D. 29, that is to say, long before any of the other New Testament books. Other parts might have been written at almost any date before the death of James, which Josephus places in A.D. 62. The editing of his literary remains would speedily follow his death.

Any careful reader of the first nineteen verses can see how the editor has done his work. The superscription is editorial. The first fragment (i. 2-8) shows how temptation may be an education to the wise, and how wisdom can be won by prayer; but not if we are double-minded. The second fragment (i. 9-11) deals with the perishableness of riches. These two are quite disconnected. The editor has merely put them down consecutively. Then comes a third fragment (i. 12-16), returning to the subject of temptation, yet evidently not following up the first. This is probably why the editor separates the first and third fragments, in spite of their common subject. In many places a single verse seems to come in, independently of what precedes and what follows it. Verse seventeen may be an example of this sort—an isolated jewel found among the author's manuscripts, and inserted where we find it, by the editor's discretion. Sometimes he seems to have introduced connecting links. Thus after the phrase in verse nineteen, 'Ye know this, my beloved brethren,' the 'but' seems to be an attempt to logically connect two disconnected fragments. The attempt may seem clumsy, but at least it diminishes the logical disconnection. The rest of the Epistle can similarly be broken up, sometimes with hesitation, sometimes with practical certainty. It would be useless to seek for such an order of thought as we find in some of Paul's Epistles. The latter, indeed, often deal with a variety of subjects, but even then a single subject will be logically worked out through successive chapters. In *James*, on the contrary, isolated thoughts are jotted down, each of them occupying from a few lines to a dozen verses. In his five chapters he deals thus with such vast subjects as

temptation, prayer, patience, wealth and poverty, the misuse of speech, the relation between belief and practice, true and false wisdom, censoriousness, quarrelsomeness, worldliness, ritual, oaths, confession, conscience. On every one of these points he speaks wise and pregnant words, often throwing a flood of light upon some complicated matter, in the space of a couple of lines. In short, so far as the *form* of this Epistle goes, we have the sort of result that would be produced by stringing together extracts from Bacon's Essays, and providing them with a superscription and a few connecting links.

Any attempt to summarize such an Epistle must be a failure, but the following may be taken as the leading thoughts:

(1) Religion consists of two things, and two only—active beneficence and inward purity.

(2) Beliefs, words, and ritual, are of small value in comparison with deeds.

(3) Temptation may be an education, and a brave endurance of it is amply rewarded, but it does not come from God, Who gives all good gifts and no bad ones.

(4) Patience, peacefulness, silence, and study, are to be cultivated. The prayer of a righteous man is a great force if it be inspired and fervent.

(5) There should be no respect of persons. On the whole, the poor are on a higher spiritual plane than the rich.

(6) The royal law is the law of love, and obedience to it is the true liberty.

Even this list leaves untouched many of the isolated points that are dealt with in the Epistle, as well as the illustrations and arguments connected with the six leading ideas. The connection between James's doctrine of justification by works and Paul's doctrine of justification by faith is doubtful. Either author *might* be answering the other; but both theories are improbable. It is more likely that James's fragmentary note on the subject is a reply to what was an obvious danger in the

current theology, rather than a definite attack on either *Galatians* or *Romans*. If, as I suppose, James's Epistle was not published till after A.D. 62, Paul cannot have been attacking it in either of his great proclamations of justification by faith. There is no real contradiction between the two doctrines. True faith according to Paul must manifest itself in love; while according to James, faith is the very foundation of Christian life.

It is interesting to notice the relation of this Epistle to Judaism, which in the time of James included at least five different elements:

(1) The Moral Law, derived from the Ten Commandments, and the teachings of the Prophets.

(2) The Ceremonial Law—circumcision, ritual, sacrifices, and the Temple worship.

(3) The Revelation of the Unity and Righteousness of God.

(4) The Jewish Apocalypses, beginning with Daniel and continuing down to and beyond the first century.

(5) The Wisdom Literature, beginning in the later books of the Old Testament, but mainly found in the Apocrypha.

Of these five elements, (1), (3), and (5) are very prominent in *James*. The other two are either not alluded to or are depreciated. Let us look at the five in order.

(1) Of all the New Testament writers, none is more intensely ethical than James. Of what we have called his six leading ideas, no less than five belong mainly to the realm of morality—morality warmed by emotion and inspired by God. In this respect, however, the New Testament and the Old are at one. The ethical teaching of James might have come with equal appropriateness from James the Jew or James the Christian. He is said to have been known as James the Righteous, and surely no more appropriate designation could be found for the author of that epistle in which Righteousness is glorified from end to end.

(2) The scanty mention and comparative disparagement of ceremonial and institutional religion, might at first

seem surprising. According to tradition, James was a devoted Jew, spending much of his time in the Temple. But it must be remembered that the belittling of ritual, sacrifices, and institutional religion, is a note of many of the greatest of the Old Testament prophets. In these respects James is reiterating the message which Isaiah, Micah, and others had made a household word to the rest of the Jews. If we have correctly interpreted the attitude of James (p. 12) at the Council of Jerusalem, we see that the teaching of the Epistle exactly corresponds with what was to be expected from the president of that famous Council.

(3) Similarly James's insistence that Our Father is the Giver of all Good, and of nothing evil, is in the Judaic strain. The Old Testament, if studied chronologically, and not in the arbitrary order of our Bible, is a progressive revelation of God as a perfectly righteous being, and of religion as something essentially moral and spiritual. No doubt the stricter ritual insisted upon after the Exile, and the introduction of the Apocalyptic literature, interrupt the current, or, at least, introduce divergences from it. The ethical element was to some extent but not entirely submerged in the ritualistic and Apocalyptic movements. The suffering of the Jews and the moral dangers to which they were exposed from contact with surrounding nations, helped to accentuate the exclusiveness of Judaism; but none the less, there was a continual progress towards those conceptions of God's character which were fully proclaimed by Jesus. Here again we feel that the author of this Epistle might equally well be one of the nobler sort of Jews or one of the nobler sort of Christians.

(4) The absence of Apocalyptic detail similarly leaves us without positive guidance as to whether James wrote before or after his conversion to Christianity. To the votaries of both religions, the atmosphere was charged with Apocalyptic expectations. But this did not appeal to the author of *James*. He believed, whether as Jew or as Christian, in the coming of Messiah; but he was little

interested in clouds, trumpets, and angels, and he makes no use of the common imagery of the Judgment Day or of a future Heaven and Hell. For him 'the Judge standeth'—not *shall* stand—'before the door.' There is Hell for the rich men who have exploited the poor, and kept back the wages of those who mowed and reaped for them; but it seems to be a hell here on earth, rather than in some distant future (v. 1-4, and 9). Here again we have to notice that, widely as the Apocalyptic ideas were spread among the Jews, they seem to have been even more impressed upon the early Christians. If, as is held by the majority of critics, this Epistle was, for the most part, written long before the Sixties, we must regard the absence of Apocalyptic elements as pointing to a Jewish rather than to a Christian authorship. We may note in passing that the number of Christians who could have been in a position to keep back the hire of their labourers must have been insignificant in the time of James. The reference is, no doubt, to some of the rich Jews of the Dispersion.

(5) A similar conclusion may be deduced from the parallelism of this Epistle with the Wisdom literature of the Jews. It is perfectly clear that the author was a diligent reader of Ecclesiasticus. He took over, with slight alteration only, the following passages among others, from this single Apocryphal book:

'Whatsoever is brought upon thee, take cheerfully, and be patient when thou art changed to a low estate. For gold is tried in the fire, and acceptable men in the furnace of adversity.'

'If thou desire wisdom, keep the commandments and the Lord shall give her unto thee.'

'Distrust not the fear of the Lord; and come not unto Him with a double heart.'

Now, Christian writers of the first century might of course be keenly interested in the Wisdom literature, but as a matter of fact we do not find in any of them anything like the interest manifested by James. On the other hand, a Jew, and especially a Jew not greatly

interested in Apocalyptic writings, would naturally be specially drawn to the Wisdom literature, at any rate, if he were learned and devout.

Finally, we may notice that both the style and the matter of this Epistle are very much what might be expected from the James of tradition. The style is rugged, with the ruggedness of a peasant writer, but it shows a great gift for words, expressing isolated thoughts with extraordinary vividness. The language is good Hellenistic Greek, of the kind that would result from a constant study of the Septuagint. Now, whatever may have been his exact relaionship to Jesus, we may assume that James was by birth a peasant, and yet not an ordinary member of his class. The peasant saint, the peasant student, the peasant genius are uncommon, but not incredible. Both the tradition of the life and family history of James, and the position to which he attained in the early Church suggest that he was a man in whom these rare but not unknown types were united. The absence of references to the Judaic controversy is almost fatal to the idea that the Epistle was written by the traditional James after his conversion.

Jude

This Epistle claims to have been written by Jude, 'the brother of James,' and therefore presumably, the 'brother' of the Lord. Attacks upon its authenticity depend mainly upon indications that it was written not earlier than A.D. 100, or even A.D. 150. As usual, we are confronted by the difficulty that the Epistle attacks heresies which may have existed, but are not known to have existed, in the first century. And in the case of *Jude*, this is not the only difficulty. The author refers to the Apostolic age as to one that is over, and perhaps to the fulfilment of a prediction in *I. Timothy* (*cf. Jude* 4 and *I. Tim.* iv. 1). Such fulfilment might have followed closely upon the prediction, but the passage rather suggests a considerable interval. Moreover, the Epistle

is said to use theological terms in a technical sense which they had hardly acquired in the first century. On the other hand, the Apocalyptic ideas seem primitive, and the use of Apocryphal Jewish books is more appropriate to a Jewish Christian of the first generation than to a second century writer. The author of this Epistle is fond of quotations, but he quotes nothing that we know to have been written after A.D. 63. Half the Epistle is composed of references to and extracts from Jewish books, Canonical and Apocryphal. The author seems to regard the *Assumption of Moses* and the *Book of Enoch* as Scripture. This would be natural enough in a Jewish convert of the first century, but not in a Christian writer of the second. The claim made by the Epistle to have been written by Jude must also count for something.

It seems on the whole most likely that we have here an epistle really written by the brother of James about A.D. 68, and slightly modified by a second century editor. I shall therefore speak of the author as Jude.

Although included among general epistles, it seems clear that *Jude* was addressed to some special church, which had formerly received oral teaching from the apostle, and which is now tainted by gross immorality and godlessness. Antioch in Syria would fulfil these conditions. It was close to Jerusalem, and had been converted and instructed by Apostles. It was a licentious and corrupt city, where the Church would be specially liable to be invaded by pagan practices and ideas. After the death of James, his brother Jude, as the surviving brother of the Lord, would naturally occupy a leading position in the Jerusalem Church. If news came of the corrupt condition of Antioch, it would be most natural for Jude to be the spokesman of the Mother Church, in addressing a solemn warning and rebuke to the offending city. Those whom he attacks are described as 'ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness.'

It was the constantly recurring danger of Christianity

that the doctrine of Divine Grace made some believers feel so sure of pardon that they thought they could sin with impunity. Jude reminds such men how God punished the very same people that He had delivered from Egypt, also His own angels when they turned from Him, and the Cities of the Plain when they committed the same sins as these so-called Christians are now guilty of. After attacking their impurity, Jude next denounces the evil doers for railing against authority. He reminds them of the Apocryphal story of Michael and the Devil contending for the body of Moses, quaintly pointing out that the archangel did not rail against his great adversary. Next he reminds them of the sins of Cain, of Balaam, and of Korah. Such men are 'hidden rocks' in the Christian love feasts. They are compared to clouds without water, autumn trees without fruit, and falling stars soon to be swallowed up in darkness. Then comes a reference to the Apocalyptic threats of the *Book of Enoch:* 'Behold the Lord came with thousands of His holy ones, to execute judgment upon all.' Then we have another list of the sins of these evil doers, sins which were predicted by the Apostles, and which, unless conquered, would wreck the faith of Christians. The latter should, however, discriminate between evil doers; forgiving some 'who are in doubt'; snatching others out of the fire; but—'on some, have mercy with fear; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.' The meaning of this discrimination is obscure. Apparently the first class are to have free forgiveness; the second are to be subjected to some ecclesiastical discipline; but there is danger in showing any mercy whatever to the third. Considering the previous denunciations, the sentences on the evil doers seem somewhat lenient.

If this Epistle is really the work of Jude, we should date it between the death of James and the Fall of Jerusalem; probably towards the end of that period, about the year A.D. 68. The Apostolic age is apparently looked back upon as something that has passed away; but this reference may be only to the period when the

Twelve were still together in Jerusalem, and were at least occasionally, teaching orally at Antioch, or in whatever church is addressed in this Epistle. If *Jude* contains a reference to *I. Timothy*, it must be later than A.D. 63, though not necessarily later than A.D. 68. The writer, like James, is steeped in the Septuagint; but, unlike James, he is deeply interested in Apocalyptic predictions and legendary lore. He shows no interest in the Wisdom Books. Many affinities with classical Greek have been traced in his rather ambitious vocabulary. We should not have expected these from a man who had begun life as a peasant, and whose Greek studies would not naturally be in the Classics; but he may well have obtained his striking words from popular Hellenistic writings, and not directly from Aristotle, Aristophanes, and the rest. His style as distinguished from his vocabularly is by no means classical; in fact, it rather suggests a self-taught man, with inadequate command of his materials. An exception may be made for the final ascription, which is probably an extract from a Liturgy.

The resemblance between *Jude* and *II. Peter* will be spoken of in the next chapter.

NOTE ON CHAPTER XIII

JAMES.—Almost everything about *James* is disputed—the authorship, date, theology, object, and the persons for whom it was written. Luther disparaged the Epistle, but suggested that it might have been put together from notes taken of James's sermons. The advocates of a late date discover evidences of familiarity with other New Testament books, some as late as *Luke, Acts,* and *Matthew.* But, with the exception of what may be allusions to Paul's teaching as to Faith and Works, the references are uncertain. Familiarity with Sayings of Jesus need not have been derived from Gospels which convey those Sayings to us. The facts that we have no certain allusions to *James* from the second century, and that its authority was doubted in the third and fourth centuries, favour a late date; but it is easy to see from its contents reasons why it would not have been easily recognized as authoritative. Among the dates supported by really com-

petent critics are (1) *circa* A.D. 45; (2) *circa* A.D. 70; (3) *circa* A.D. 90; (4) *circa* A.D. 100; (5) between A.D. 100 and A.D. 120; (6) between A.D. 110 and A.D. 140; (7) btweeen A.D. 125 and A.D. 150. Of these only (1), and possibly (2) can fit in with the traditional belief as to its authorship. My suggestion that part of the Epistle was written before A.D. 29, and the rest between A.D. 30 and A.D. 63, and that the fragments were posthumously arranged into a sort of Epistle, seems best to meet the admitted difficulties. It is a mere hypothesis, but so are the other suggestions. Particulars as to these can be seen in Moffatt's *Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament,* and in most of the larger Dictionaries of the Bible.

Of English Commentaries, Hort (1909); Knowling (W.C., 1910; Ropes (I.C.C., 1916) may be mentioned. See also Mayor: *Further Studies in the Epistle of St. James* (1913).

JUDE.—*Jude* was almost certainly earlier than *II. Peter,* and used in the writing of the latter (Ewald, Hilgenfeld, Abbott, Weiss, Chase, Jülicher, and the great majority of modern critics). The brevity and the peculiarities of this Epistle may account for the fact that it is little alluded to before the closing years of the second century. It may be that its circulation was restricted. Certainly it was not unanimously accepted, even in the fourth century.

A date between A.D. 60 and A.D. 66 is defended by Weiss, Bigg, and others; but most critics, though differing widely in opinion, put it much later—anywhere between A.D. 70 and A.D. 140. Harnack suggests that *Jude* was written by some second century Jude, and that the description of him as 'brother of James' was a later interpolation. Ewald, Spitta, Zahn, Mayor, Bigg, and Chase, while inclining to the view of the authorship of the brother of James, date the Epistle after A.D. 70. If the Epistle really belongs to the second century, this is plausible; but the truth of the traditional view has not been disproved.

Jude, unlike *II. Peter,* is mentioned in the Muratorian Canon, and frequently referred to by late second century writers. Its tone is Judaic, and very conservative. In view of verses 17 and 18, the tradition that the author was the Apostle Jude (*Luke* vi. 16) must be rejected.

Among English Commentaries, Bigg (I.C.C., 1901); Mayor (Ex. G.T., 1910); James (C.G.T., 1912) may be recommended.

CHAPTER XIV

THE GENERAL EPISTLES—II

I. Peter (A.D. 63). II. Peter. (If by Peter, before A.D. 68)

Authorship Disputed

The *First Epistle of Peter* is usually included among the 'General Epistles,' but it differs from the rest in several important particulars. In the first place, it is addressed to several definite churches, and is thus more akin to *Galatians*. No doubt, in Peter's case, the churches addressed (i. 1) are so numerous and so scattered that the writer can hardly have expected his letter to find its way to all of them. But this was a comparatively unimportant matter. Let the messenger or messengers deliver the Epistle to as many of the churches as possible. Each church that received it might send a copy to others in the neighbourhood, and thus a wide circulation would be obtained among those for whom the letter was intended, even though some of the churches in 'Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia' never received it. The Epistle professes to come from 'Babylon,' which almost certainly means Rome. There is, therefore, no need of the hypothesis that posthumous remains were being sent out by a literary executor, an hypothesis which so often meets the case of those epistles which are really 'general.' Such an executor might introduce a superscription, indicating whose was the voice that was speaking from the grave to the Christian Church, but he would hardly add Babylon as the address of one whom he believed to be in Paradise; nor would he address the Epistle to a limited group of churches; nor, again, would he be likely to insert greetings from the author's friends—perhaps his

wife and son (v. 13). She 'that is in Babylon' may conceivably be a church and not a woman; but 'Mark, my son' can only refer to a man, whether he is the Apostle's son after the flesh, or only spiritually, in virtue of discipleship. A rejection of the theory of the Petrine authorship would imply a deliberate forgery, which again appears hardly reconcilable with the contents and general character of the Epistle. Moreover, in this case, the evidence of the tradition in favour of the genuineness of the work is exceptionally strong. The tradition that it was written from Rome, about the year A.D. 63, shortly after the conclusion of Paul's first imprisonment in the Imperial City, is in many respects probable. If Paul was liberated in A.D. 62, and had then resumed his missionary travels, and if Peter had joined him in Rome, the former might well have delegated to the latter the oversight of the Churches of Pontus, Cappadocia, Galatia, Asia, and Bithynia, or as many of them as had previously been under Paul's jurisdiction. There is a widespread tradition that Peter was for some years Bishop of Antioch. The difficulty of reconciling this with his supposed twenty-five years Episcopate of Rome disappears if we realize that Episcopal rule could be exercised from a distance, with only occasional visits. The churches in 'Asia' may afterwards have been transferred to Timothy, and subsequently to the author of the seven letters in the Apocalypse. These churches would form a natural group, with Ephesus as their metropolis. They formed the spiritual centre of Christianity in the second half of the first century.

The absence in *I. Peter* of any reference to clerical orders, other than the Elders who shepherd the flock, points to an early date; yet it is difficult to place this letter before A.D. 62 without making the jurisdiction of Peter overlap that of Paul. The Epistle implies that preaching was still permitted to all Christians, provided that they speak in agreement with the oracles of God—*i.e.*, the Old Testament. The internal evidence in favour of the view that the first Petrine Epistle was written by

that Peter who is familiar to us from the Gospels and the *Acts of the Apostles* is weighty, provided that we make allowance for the natural development of the character of such a man. The Peter of the Gospels is a very human and loveable character, impetuous, affectionate, trustful, blundering, and teachable. Satan wants to have him, that he may sift him like wheat, but Jesus prays that he may have strength, and that he may stablish his brethren. We have to consider how far this conception of the character and personality of the Apostle corresponds with the impression derived from *I. Peter*.

A dominant note of the Epistle is hopefulness. The writer begins by blessing Him who has twice begotten us. Our second birth is unto a living *hope*. He appeals to the *hope* that is in us. The Saints are to him those who *hoped* in God. This hopefulness is characteristic of one who often stumbled, but always recovered. The Resurrection would confirm Peter's natural hopefulness, by showing that God brings good out of evil; and that what seems to dash, may really fulfil our highest yearnings. Such hopefulness was specially desirable in a leader on whom the task was laid to 'stablish the brethren.' It had sometimes led the Apostle into rashness; and once an apparent failure of his hopes had caused him to deny his Lord. But he was a man who could profit by mistakes, and he had now learned to rest his hopes not on things temporary, but on 'an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away' (i. 4). Peter was then fit to be the chief of the infant Church; to pave the way for the admission of the Gentiles; to steer wisely between the revolutionary policy of Paul and the conservatism of those Jews who looked to James as their leader.

The second dominant note of this Epistle is moderation. This quality was not characteristic of the Peter of the Gospel days, but it was a quality which his experiences were well suited to teach him, and one of which we see plenty of evidence in the early chapters of

Acts. Peter certainly held some sort of primacy among the Twelve, but he never seems disposed to assert it. A thorough Jew, he yet accepts the lesson that no one whom God has created can be common or unclean. He is content to see Paul coming to the front. He resigns to James the rulership of the Mother Church at Jerusalem. And in this Epistle hopefulness is ever balanced by moderation and self-restraint. 'Be sober and set your hope perfectly on the grace that is to be brought unto you;' and again, 'Be subject to every ordinance of man;' 'Be sober and watchful.' The words have additional significance if the author was really that Peter who had been warned to watch and pray, but heedless of the caution had rashly drawn his sword, and afterwards had denied his Master. Can we wonder that with all his hopefulness he yet feels that we must live our life here 'as strangers and pilgrims'? Even spiritual powers are to be used with moderation. He believes in the speedy coming of the Lord, but the moral he draws is 'Be ye therefore of sound mind, and be sober unto prayers; above all things being fervent in your love among yourselves' (iv. 7, 8). The Peter of earlier days would have forgotten everything in the thought that his Lord was returning; but time and experience and mistakes may well have brought him a sense of the need of self-restraint, and of the claims of other people. So too of Patience, the third great virtue insisted upon in this Epistle. This was not a noticeable quality in the Peter of the Gospels, but it was a grace towards which such a man would be likely to grow; and certainly the Peter of the *Acts* is more patient than the Peter of the Gospels. He relies more on argument, and never seems to wax impatient at the hardness of men's hearts and the strength of their prejudices.

The writer of the Epistle lays great stress upon the influence of Christian example upon the heathen, 'that wherein they speak against you as evil-doers, they may by your good works, which they behold, glorify God.' 'For so is the will of God, that by well doing ye should

put to silence the ignorance of foolish men' (ii. 15). One who had seen with his own eyes how Jesus endured persecution, might well have penned the words: 'Who when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, threatened not.' There is no reason to suppose that any of the Gospels had yet been written; but even if the author of the Epistle had had access to them, he could scarcely have derived this description from their narratives. It reads like the independent account of one who had himself witnessed the demeanour of the suffering Messiah. The same scenes may have been in his mind when he wrote that God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. Similarly, the man who had received the command 'Feed my sheep' would be especially likely to describe Christ as the 'shepherd and bishop of your souls.' Many passages in the Epistle come like echoes of the words spoken by Jesus to Peter and the other disciples. Thus, 'girding up the loins of your mind may well be a reminiscence of 'let your loins be girded.' Such a phrase as 'whom, not having seen, *ye* love,' suggests that the writer had himself seen Jesus. Otherwise *we* would presumably have been substituted for *ye*. These arguments do not perhaps count for much when looked at separately, but collectively they confirm the traditional view of the authorship of the Epistle—that view which is, moreover, asserted in the Epistle itself. An argument in favour of a later date has been drawn from the references to persecution. These would certainly appear more appropriate to a period subsequent to the Neronic persecutions; yet if we put the Epistles later than A.D. 65, we must either reject the tradition that Peter was martyred under Nero, or we must assign the Epistle which bears his name to some other author. We cannot, however, speak with certainty as to how much there was of persecution in Asia Minor before Nero's savage onslaught upon the Roman Christians. Certainly the mere profession of Christianity did not amount to a crime under Roman Law before A.D. 68. It is not, however, clear that *I. Peter* implies legal persecution.

If it be so interpreted, I should doubt whether we can date it much before A.D. 80. Peter may conceivably have been still alive at this time if he did not die under Nero, but it is unlikely that this theory, if correct, should have no confirmation from tradition. The words 'for the time is come for judgment to begin at the house of God' (iv. 17) may indicate an *expectation* of a legal persecution, and there may well have been grounds for such an expectation before the actual outburst of the Neronic storm. Of non-official persecution and suffering for the Faith, there had been abundance from the earliest times.

The attitude towards the heathen government taken in *I. Peter* is nearly the same as Paul's. Christians must conform as far as possible to the laws and customs of the state. Household unity is to be maintained by the submission of wives and slaves, with corresponding considerateness on the part of husbands and masters. Believers are to avoid making themselves liable to persecution and even to suspicion. They are to do this from motives of caution as well as of piety. But the great danger is spoken of as something that lies in the future. A fiery trial awaits them. Perhaps Peter saw signs of the coming Neronic outburst, or, at least of that unpopularity of Christians which tempted the Emperor to throw on them the responsibility for his own crimes. One passage in this Epistle is of a unique character. It declares that, after His death, Jesus went and preached to the spirits in prison, among whom it specifies those who were drowned in the days of Noah (iii. 19, 20). Many commentators have been perplexed by this statement, because it seems so plainly to imply the possibility of repentance after death, even in the case of such sinners as those whom the flood came to destroy. All attempts to explain away this teaching seem quite futile; and any critic not dominated by doctrinal hypotheses will assume that the writer meant what he says—viz., that Jesus descended into Hades, and there preached to those who had died in their sins.

The use of the word *dispersion* in i. 1 indicates that

the author was a Jew. He applies to the scattered Christians a phrase familiar to Peter in his Judaic days. Similarly in i. 2 he seems to be referring to the sprinkling of the people, under the Old Dispensation, with the blood of the sacrifice, as ordered in *Exodus* xxiv. 8. The chief argument against the Petrine authorship grows out of the Pauline character of much of the teaching. The writer had evidently studied some of the Pauline Epistles, and is influenced by Paul's style, especially perhaps by Chapters xii. and xiii. of *Romans;* but if Peter's relation to Paul has been correctly indicated in our earlier chapters, the Pauline characteristics of *I. Peter* are no real argument against the Petrine authorship.

II. Peter

This Epistle contains, as we shall see, at least one sentence that cannot have been written by Peter. The other objections to its authenticity are very weighty, but not absolutely conclusive. They suggest on the whole, a date more than half way through the second century. Such a date is accepted by most critics, but it is not easy to see how a book written as late as this could ever have been regarded as the work of Peter. On the other hand, it seems just possible that the Epistle was put together *mainly* out of Peter's literary remains, and yet was not published before the second century. If this is so, the editorial work would appear to have been somewhat inefficiently performed. Thus the editor includes almost the whole of Jude's Epistle. Of course, this fragment may have been originally Peter's and have been used by Jude or a Jude editor, but a careful comparison seems to point to a dependence of the Petrine matter upon that of Jude. Moreover, if Jude did not compose this, he composed so little that his literary remains are not likely to have been published. Peter may have possessed a manuscript slightly adapted from *Jude,* and an editor may have imagined that this was one of Peter's own compositions.

The diction in the two Petrine Epistles differs considerably, even if we strike out the Jude portions. Peter probably knew little Greek, and employed a translator in his more formal Epistle. The posthumous remains may have been in his own rough uncultured Greek, or they too may have been translated. If so, the later translator must have been a man fond of unusual and ambitious words, but with only a limited vocabulary, as may be seen from the repetition of both phrases and particles. The style is unworthy of the matter, but this rather favours the theory that it was a translation. Most competent critics reject the view that Peter wrote the Second Epistle as we have it. They point out that we do not find it quoted as Peter's until the time of Origen, and that Origen himself admitted the doubtfulness of its authenticity. They also argue that the Epistle alludes to forms of heresy which, so far as we know, did not exist in the lifetime of the Apostle. Finally, they regard it as most improbable that Peter would have spoken of Paul's letters in the way in which the Epistle does speak of them (iii. 15, 16). These arguments are cumulatively weighty, but they are not conclusive. As to the absence of early references—the book may have been Petrine and yet little known. Peter's manuscripts, including the Jude passage, may have fallen into the hands of an editor who did not secure for it any large circulation. The very fact that he included the Jude composition may have brought the work under suspicion. As for the heresies alluded to—they certainly existed in germ from a very early date. The most important of them is alluded to by Paul in *II. Corinthians*. The study of comparative religion has made critics hesitate to deny the early origin of any of the Gnostic opinions. As to the references to Paul's Epistles—they cannot be regarded as even suspicious; with the exception of one single clause, which, as we shall see, must have been interpolated. Consider the two men as they are revealed to us. Why should not the senior Apostle speak as follows of the genius whom he sometimes opposed, but whose greatness he must have

appreciated: 'Our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given to him, wrote unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; wherein are some things hard to be understood, which the ignorant and unstedfast wrest, *as they do also the other scriptures*, unto their own destruction'? (iii. 15, 16). The italicized words cannot be by Peter. There is no evidence of any New Testament writing being regarded as 'scripture' in the first century; but these words, or the single word 'other' may well be a third century interpolation or marginal note. Omitting this, the passage would be just what we should expect Peter to think and to say about Paul, many of whose sayings he would find hard to understand, and even perhaps dangerous; though such a man as Peter would love and honour such a man as Paul, with characteristic humility. On the other hand, it is hard to believe that a second century writer would invent these words and put them into the mouth of Peter. If his object was to glorify Paul, he would probably have done so in a less qualified fashion. Other passages in the Epistle show a moral grandeur and insight, which we might expect from Peter, rather than from an unknown second century writer who had assumed the name of the Apostle.

Several passages in the Epistle suggest that the writer was an eye-witness of the earthly career of Jesus. Take, for instance, the reference to the Transfiguration (i. 16, 17). A second century writer would naturally have confined his references to what he found in the Gospels; but our Epistle says: 'We were eye-witnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father, honour and glory.' This is an addition to the Gospel account, and one which a later writer would hardly have made. But Peter, looking back to the incident, might well describe the majesty of the transfigured face as a reflection of the Father's glory. Similarly, a later writer would hardly have omitted the presence of Moses and Elias; but to Peter who was present, this might well have seemed a subordinate matter, in comparison with the actual

Transfiguration, which was to be as 'a lamp shining in a dark place until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts' (i. 19).

If we regard this Epistle as a posthumous and edited work based on Peter's manuscript, we shall place its publication in its present form as subsequent to A.D. 64. We have no means of telling whether the Jude manuscript had been altered before it came into the hands of the editor. If his document was substantially *Jude*, as we now have it, the editor must have suppressed quotations from Apocryphal books, and may have inserted several sections of his own, in order to refute current heresies as to 'the last days.'

If we reject the Petrine authorship, we may regard this Epistle either as a second century forgery, or as the work of one of the Apostle's disciples, who tried to express his master's doctrines and sometimes used his master's words; of one who, perhaps from motives of genuine humility, used his master's name rather than his own. The later we put the date of the Epistle, the greater on the whole is the difficulty of accounting for the insertion of the Jude fragment. This can hardly have been deliberate, and therefore we are compelled to assume that the author was not acquainted with the Epistle attributed to Jude. On the other hand, if we attribute the document to the earlier years of the second century, the difficulty about the use of the term *scripture* for the Pauline Epistles is hardly surmountable. If we attribute this to a later interpolation, the chief argument against the Petrine authorship disappears.

It is noteworthy that this Epistle definitely rejects the belief that the Second Advent would probably take place within a few years or a few centuries. The writer insists that with God one day is as a thousand years; clearly implying that if the Second Advent is postponed for a few thousand years, we must not regard the promise of its speedy coming as in any way falsified. This suggests a late date for the Epistle, though it is quite conceivable that Peter might have come to acquiesce

in the possibility of a long delay of the Coming. The delay is attributed to the Divine Will that none should perish, but that all should come to repentance (iii. 9). The false teachers referred to in *II. Peter* are described in terms very similar to those used in Paul's Pastorals. This suggests something like a common date, whether that date be in the sixties of the first century, or well on in the second.

NOTE ON CHAPTER XIV

I. PETER.—Internal evidence as to the date of this Epistle is pretty equally divided between the period A.D. 64-70 and a date after A.D. 90. Some passages seem more appropriate to a period of sporadic persecution, such as A.D. 64-70, others to a more thoroughly organized persecution, such as took place under Domitian in A.D. 96. The early and varied tradition that Peter wrote this Epistle points, of course, to the earlier date. There are some striking resemblances to passages in Peter's speeches, as given in *Acts*. If the Epistle was mainly his, he presumably had the help of some better Greek scholar (Ewald, Zahn, Bacon, etc.); perhaps Silvanus (*cf.* v. 12) whom von Soden and Spitta regard as the author of the letter. If Peter was the author, it was probably written in the beginning of the Neronic persecution (A.D. 64). Ramsay gives reasons for doubting the tradition that Peter died in that persecution, and suggests that the Epistle was written after A.D. 80, in the extreme old age of the Apostle.

The Pauline features of *I. Peter* may be connected with the intercourse of the two Apostles at Rome.

The enumeration of churches addressed (i. 1) follows the natural itinerary of a messenger carrying a circular letter, after sailing from Rome to Pontus. Erbes, van Manen, and others dispute, on insufficient grounds, the identification of Babylon (v. 13) with Rome.

English Commentaries: Bigg (I.C.C., 1901); Hort (1898); Blenkin (C.G.T., 1914). Kirsop Lake's article in Enc. Brit. is valuable.

II. PETER.—Most critics reject the Petrine authorship of *II. Peter,* and consider the Epistle to be a second century

work. Their verdict is probably right, unless the reference to 'other scriptures' is an interpolation. Except on this point, the rejection of Petrine authorship falls short of demonstration, but several passages are suspicious—*e.g.*, the assertion that the 'fathers' of the Christian Church are dead. The difference in spirit, style, and language between the two Epistles of 'Peter' are striking. The resemblances may be accounted for by deliberate imitation. A date between A.D. 140 and A.D. 170 has found most favour, but there are the widest differences of opinion as to the exact object, the place of origin, and the integrity of this Epistle. The opinion to which I incline—that genuine Petrine fragments have been worked up, with interpolations, into epistolary form—is opposed to that of the majority of the critics. They attach little weight to the positive claim of the Epistle to be Peter's or to the implication that the author was an eye-witness of incidents in the Life of Jesus (i. 14 and 16-18). They regard these as deliberate inventions of a second century writer (so Harnack and most critics), but Zahn, Spitta, Weiss, and Bigg favour the Petrine authorship. We have no evidence that *II. Peter* was known till the third century.

Of English Commentaries, the best are perhaps Mayor (Ex. G.T., 1910); James (C.G.T., 1912). See also Robson, *Studies in II. Peter* (1915).

CHAPTER XV

THE EARLIEST GOSPELS—I

MARK. (A.D. 66; ADDITIONS AFTER A.D. 70)

CHRISTIANS must always have been interested in the life and sayings of the Founder of their religion. But in the twenty or thirty years after His death, there was much less of this interest than we should have expected. Believers looked forward to the speedy return of their Lord; and, so far as they looked backward, they were so greatly absorbed by the closing scenes of the Incarnate Life, that they allowed the rest of the biography to remain in the background. By the closing scenes of the Life of Our Lord, I mean especially:

(1) The Institution of the Lord's Supper, with all that it involved, especially the doctrine of the Brotherhood of Man.

(2) The Crucifixion, with the supreme sanction which it gave to the Law of Self-sacrifice.

(3) The Resurrection, regarded as a pledge of the future life for man, and still more as an assurance that the Lord was a Living Lord.

(4) The Ascension, with the promise of a speedy Second Advent.

Anyone who reads the Epistles carefully will be struck by the rarity and slightness of their references to all that happened between the Incarnation and the Institution of the Lord's Supper. The Parables, for instance, and the Sermon on the Mount are scarcely mentioned in any of the Epistles, or in any of the missionary speeches recorded in the *Acts of the Apostles*.

Still, apart from direct evidence, we must assume that the deeds and sayings of Jesus were not altogether un-

recorded by primitive Christians; and we happen to have direct evidence on this point in the opening of the third Gospel. 'Forasmuch as *many* have taken in hand to draw up a narrative . . . it seemed good to me also, having traced the course of all things accurately from the first, to write.' Notice here, firstly, that the word translated *narrative,* implies a connected account; and, secondly, that what was now written with a similar intention, is one of our own Gospels. The natural conclusion is that before Luke's Gospel was written, there had been many attempts to produce a more or less consecutive narrative. One of these attempts was our second Gospel, either in the form in which we know it, or in a very similar form. If we provisionally assign the traditional names to the Evangelists, it is almost certain that Luke had read and made use of Mark's Gospel, or something very like it. It is almost equally certain that nothing resembling *Matthew* was used by Luke. There are, indeed, close resemblances between the two; but there are also differences and omissions which make it almost impossible that either author wrote with the Gospel of the other before him. On the other hand, the similarity would be reasonably accounted for if the two Gospels were both partly founded upon documents used by both Matthew and Luke. One such document we know of, namely, the Mark Gospel. There was probably another which has not come down to us, and which many critics refer to as Q. They mean under this title to designate the one or more lost documents which contain all that is common to *Matthew* and *Luke,* but absent from *Mark.*

How much use Matthew and Luke made of *Mark* is seen from the fact that six hundred and ten out of the six hundred and sixty verses of *Mark* are utilized in the two later Gospels. Curiously enough, however, we find that in many of these cases Matthew and Luke agree in their departures from the words of Mark. It has, therefore, been suggested that the Mark document they used was not our second Gospel, but some earlier or later form of it. Some critics refer to a supposed *earlier* form

of it as *Ur-Markus*. Others contend that it was a *later* variation from the second Gospel, with which Matthew and Luke were acquainted. We will use the symbol M to represent this Mark-like document, without committing ourselves on the still unsettled question whether it was earlier or later than our form of Mark's Gospel. One fundamental difference between M and Q is that we know the former to have been a complete document, but we have no proof that there was any such unity in the documents whence Matthew and Luke derived what is common to their Gospels, and yet not found in *Mark*. If we assume the unity of Q, we have still only discovered two (Q and M) of the 'many' narratives to which Luke refers.

Perhaps a third such document may have been a collection of Sayings of Jesus, written in Aramaic Hebrew by the Apostle Matthew. The existence of such a collection was definitely asserted by Papias. If this collection was largely used by the author of our first Gospel, we can understand how it was that the latter came to be attributed to the Apostle Matthew. That the Matthew Gospel in its present form was written by the Apostle is so improbable that it may be called incredible. There is no such difficulty about the ascription of the second and third Gospels to Mark and Luke. Such ascription is in accordance with early and widespread tradition, and it is not easy to account for the selection of these two names, rather than those of more prominent persons such as Peter and Paul, unless Mark and Luke were the actual writers. Accordingly, we may provisionally arrange the authors as follows:

Deutero-Matthew, using M and Q and the *Logia* of Matthew, and perhaps some other authorities.

Mark, assisted by the recollections of Peter, and many documents lost to us.

Luke, using M and Q and certainly other authorities, which we will call L.

This, however, leaves altogether open the question whether Q was one document, or two, or several. The

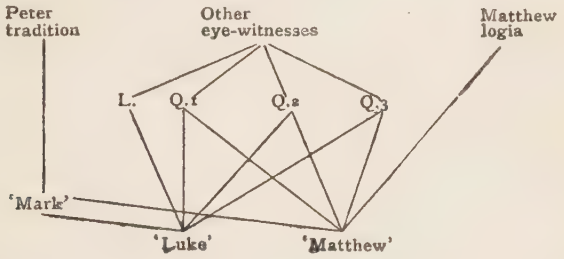
letter merely symbolizes the manuscript or manuscripts which were not used by Mark, but were used by both Deutero-Matthew and Luke. In favour of the view that there were several documents which we in our ignorance group together as Q, is the argument that this would fit in better with the 'many' of *Luke* i. Moreover, it is, on the whole, more probable that a number of short manuscripts would be lost, than that we should have no direct evidence of the existence of one of such interest and importance as Q would be, on the alternative theory. The hypothesis of many short manuscripts rather than one long one certainly seems to agree better with the probable and natural evolution of the Gospels. Some disciples would make a collection of Sayings. Others would jot down, perhaps for preaching purposes, stories that they had heard from Apostles or others who had been eye-witnesses. It is possible, of course, that some unknown writer would have embodied a large number of these in the single Q, but had he done this, some tradition of his work would probably have survived. We should hear of five Evangelists rather than four.

We next notice that out of eighty-four passages which Deutero-Matthew and Luke are supposed to have derived from Q, not less than sixty-four are differently placed by the two Evangelists. This would be natural enough if each of them used several documents, but if they were mainly relying upon a single source for their common material, they would probably have paid more respect to the order and arrangement of their authority. Notice, too, that in some cases *Matthew* and *Luke* attach different morals to the same saying. Compare 'Fear them not therefore, for there is nothing covered' (*Matt.* x. 26), with 'Beware ye of . . . hypocrisy. But there is nothing covered' (*Luke* xii. 1, 2). It is possible that each Evangelist attached his own moral to a saying of Jesus; but it is more probable that each followed a different document.

Some critics identify the Matthew *logia* with Q, but this increases the difficulty about the 'many' narratives of *Luke* i. 1. Moreover, the common element of *Matthew*

and *Luke* contains much that would be out of place in a collection of sayings—*e.g.*, the stories of the Baptism of Christ, and of the healing of the centurion's servant.

The following diagram illustrates the suggested derivation of the three first Gospels.



' Mark ' in the above symbolizes our second Gospel, or the variant used by Deutero-Matthew and Luke. Q1, Q2, and Q3 represent either the single document usually called Q, or several documents, all of which were used by both Deutero-Matthew and Luke. L stands for the manuscripts or oral traditions used by Luke, but not by Mark or Deutero-Matthew. It seems clear that even Paul had some *logia* to draw upon. For instance, he quotes Our Lord as ordering that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel; and as sanctifying the marriage tie. He does not hint that these sayings had been directly revealed to him. On the contrary, the suggestion is that his hearers are acquainted with these *logia*. But the rarity of his quotations suggests that he had neither many nor long documents of the sort; otherwise he would surely have quoted more of the life-giving words. Thus, when he blames the Galatians for observing *days*, he would naturally have quoted what Jesus said about the Sabbath had he known of that Saying.

Before the Gospels were written, say in the years A.D. 40-50, any Christian who could read and write would have had strong motives for making a collection of the Deeds and Sayings of Jesus. A great number of such collections may well have been utilized by the four

Evangelists, and on the whole, we must conclude that there is no sufficient evidence that the facts common to Matthew and Luke were all derived from a single document, Q. Some of these compilations were probably made with a definite object—*e.g.*, to prove that Jesus was Messiah; but it seems likely that the first collections were mere arbitrary groups of anecdotes and sayings. The supplying of connecting links and of an orderly arrangement was one of the chief difficulties of the Evangelists.

In *Mark* we specially notice the comparative fewness of the Sayings. This may be either because he did not possess many collections of *logia*, or because he was less interested in his Master's Words than in His Deeds. Probably both explanations are partly true. Living and writing as he did in western Christendom, Mark would perhaps be affected by the comparatively practical character of his environment. The East is the natural home of philosophy; the West of action. Similarly, Mark, writing in the West, would probably have access to more narratives of Deeds than of Words. Some of the latter he naturally introduced. The Apocalyptic Sayings would interest workers and thinkers alike, for they pointed to coming events in the world of time and space. Some parables also find a place in the second Gospel, for stories are welcome all over the world. But of the more mystical, more paradoxical, more spiritual and philosophical sayings of Jesus, Mark probably knew and thought less. At any rate he was not likely to find them so well suited for his particular purpose.

Some of Mark's narrative agrees with the tradition that Peter was his authority. He gives special prominence to the call of Peter, to Peter's family, to Peter's words. But such prominence is hardly sufficient to give much support to this theory. Somewhat more weight may be given to the orderly arrangement of the materials. The author may have been an eye-witness of part of the life of Jesus. He may have been the naked young man of *Mark* xiv. 51. The other Evangelists are silent about

this incident, which would naturally have made a much deeper impression on the hero of the story. The fact that Mark's name does not appear in any of our four Gospels makes it improbable that he had much to do with the events he recorded; yet we find in many parts of the second Gospel a remarkable arrangement, such as could hardly have been achieved except by someone at the very heart of the movement.

We have seen that the earlier documents consisted of disconnected groups of sayings and acts; but—what is more singular—the same may to a great extent be said of the first and third Gospels. This looks as though Deutero-Matthew and Luke had no one to guide them adequately through the material they were using. In many cases they seem to put down events and words without knowledge of their sequence. In Mark alone do we get a fairly consistent development. In his pages we notice that at first Jesus makes no claim to Messiahship. He preaches the Kingdom, but not His own Kingship. He even enjoins silence upon those who hailed Him as the Holy One of God. Halfway through the Gospel He asks His disciples whom men say that He is. Though they say He is Messiah, He refuses to accept the title; but He apparently begins to identify Himself with the Suffering Servant of prophecy. Presently He allows people to hail Him without rebuke, and last of all, at His trial, He solemnly admits that He is the Christ. No doubt in the passage *Mark* ii. 1 to iii. 6 He uses the title of the Son of Man. This passage, however, is probably derived not from Peter, but from another document utilized by Mark.

An objection to the theory that Mark was instructed by Peter, has been found in the fact that the two most depreciatory stories about the great Apostle are both given in the second Gospel. But, from what we know of the character of Peter, we feel that he would have been the last person to conceal stories discreditable to himself, or such incidents as the stinging rebuke which followed his denial of his Master. The belief that Mark wrote the

second Gospel under the influence of Peter is based upon very early traditions. These traditions are in some respects contradictory, but this on the whole should rather strengthen our belief in the points which they have in common. Of such traditions, the most interesting is one quoted by Eusebius from Papias, who probably wrote the words in question within fifty years from the date of the Mark Gospel. According to Eusebius, Papias says that the second Gospel was written by Mark, who wrote down all that Peter remembered of the words and acts of Jesus, but not in order. He further hints that Mark was at a great disadvantage, from the fact that he had not been in personal contact with the Lord.

Papias frequently records improbable traditions, but these particular statements cannot be lightly brushed aside as mere hearsay. The facts must have been known to many in the first half of the second century. Papias implies that this Gospel was already regarded as not authoritative; otherwise he would not have disparaged it, as not in proper order, and not the work of an eyewitness. The explanation of the disparagement is no doubt that Papias belonged to the Johannine school, and that he tested the second Gospel by the standard of the fourth. Wherever the order of events differed, John must be right and therefore Mark must be wrong. Mark had, no doubt, done his best and had produced an excellent work, but, of course, he could not write with the knowledge and authority of the Beloved Disciple. Such would be the natural conviction of a member of the Johannine school. A modern reader must make allowance for the personal equation, and will probably conclude that Papias is a good witness to the authorship of this Gospel and its connection with the Petrine tradition, but that his opinion of Mark's deficiencies is not of much importance, even though he lived so soon after the Apostolic Age.

Clement of Alexandria, another second century authority, informs us that Mark wrote the Gospel at

the request of some who had heard the preaching of Peter, and that Peter knew that this was being done, though he did not accept any responsibility for it. Elsewhere, however, the same Clement says that Peter authorized the reading aloud of Mark's writings in the churches. The two statements are not absolutely contradictory. Peter may have declined to take any part in the work, and yet have subsequently authorized it. If we accept either or both statements, we have to date the Mark Gospel before A.D. 65, if we take this as the date of Peter's death. But this date is doubtful. Furthermore, we have a statement by another second century authority that Mark put into writing, *after Peter's death,* what Peter had preached. These three early witnesses agree in attributing the authorship of the Gospel to Mark, and in representing him as largely indebted to Peter. The variations in their stories indicate that their testimonies are independent. In the absence of any serious evidence to the contrary, and in view of such confirmation of the tradition as we have already alluded to, we may then probably accept the view that Mark was the author and Peter the chief source of the second Gospel.

It is probable, however, that Mark did not rely wholly for his information upon Peter. If, indeed, he was that naked young man of *Mark* xiv. 51 and 52, he would have recollections of his own. At any rate, he must have met and talked with others among the original disciples, and presumably he had access to some of the records of speeches and incidents that were already in existence. One section of the Gospel (xiii. 14-19) looks as if it had been written just before the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. If the rest was written before, or immediately after Peter's death, it is possible that some of chapter xiii. was a later addition.

The concluding verses of the Gospel (xvi. 9-22) are almost certainly *not* the work of Mark. The external and internal evidence against them amounts almost to proof; and there is no sufficient reason for rejecting the

statement in a recently-discovered manuscript that these verses were written by a presbyter named Ariston. But it is hardly conceivable that Mark meant his Gospel to end with the statement in verse 8 that, when the women received the angelic message of the Resurrection, they went out and fled from the tomb, ' for they were afraid.' Three possibilities remain. Perhaps Mark never finished his Gospel, and chanced to leave off at this point. Perhaps the conclusion of what he wrote has accidentally perished. Perhaps this conclusion was deliberately destroyed, presumably as being for some reason unsatisfactory to the authorities. Any one of these explanations is possible. Illness or death or imprisonment may have prevented the completion of the work. Manuscripts were so perishable that a page or pages might entirely disappear, even from a work which had been speedily multiplied. Finally, it is difficult to set any limit to the possibilities of ignorance and folly in high places. The mangling of masterpieces is not uncommon, but it is satisfactory that in this case, at any rate, the other alternatives are at least as probable.

If Mark did write a conclusion to his Gospel, we have no means of guessing what that conclusion contained. Ariston or someone else provided the dozen verses with which in our Bible the Gospel is ended. Some good manuscripts give a quite different and much shorter termination, in which we are simply told that the women reported what had happened to those about Peter, to whom Jesus Himself then appeared, and through whom He sent the message of salvation from east to west. Like the canonical termination, this is evidently merely a pious attempt to provide an appropriate ending, and throws no light upon the problem of how the gap came to exist.

It was not till the second century that the four biographies of Jesus were called Gospels. In Apostolic times the Gospel was the good news that Messiah had come; that the Kingdom of God was near; that God loved man, and had given His Son in order that men

should be saved from sin. And so when Mark opens with the words 'The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ,' he certainly does not mean 'Here begins the Gospel according to St. Mark.' He means that the good news brought to the world by Jesus follows, as was prophesied, on the coming of a messenger, preaching repentance and the forgiveness of sins, baptizing with water and preparing the way for One Who would baptize with the Spirit (i. 1-8). All the four Gospels represent John's baptism as the beginning of the active Ministry of Jesus; but the subsequent Evangelists all start further back, with the ancestry or the events preceding the Nativity, or with the Eternal Pre-existence of Jesus. Mark, writing first, keeps more closely to his exact subject, the bringing of the good news, and he therefore starts with the Forerunner, who anticipated part of the Master's teaching, 'and preached the baptism of repentance, unto remission of sins.' The Evangelists were not greatly interested in any part of the Baptist's work that was not associated with Jesus. They only give us passing hints of the rest, and we have little means of filling up the gaps they leave. Evidently the two reformers went along different roads, which only occasionally intersected. Each of them came to be regarded by some as the Messiah, and we find traces as late as the fourth century of people who held this belief about John the Baptist. The Gospels tell us that he repudiated the claim, but that at one time he doubted whether Jesus was really the Christ. Jesus, on the other hand, regarded John as a prophet, and more than a prophet. In being baptized by the Forerunner, Our Lord seemed to become his disciple; but after that the two trod different paths, and we are left to guess what was the exact policy which the Baptist pursued.

The baptism, as in the other Synoptics, is followed by the temptation; but Mark's account of it is very brief, and only tells us that it lasted for forty days, and that 'He was with the wild beasts, and the angels ministered unto Him.' Rationalistic critics naturally suspect the

authenticity of the famous story of the three temptations told by Matthew and Luke; but, of course, it is possible that the story was true, even though Mark was ignorant of it, or chose for some reason to omit it.

Then follows the call of the first four disciples, and the first cure of a demoniac. Such calls and such cures are very prominent in Mark. By the former the foundations for the Church were being laid. By the latter the conflict between good and evil spirits was emphasized. We have no means of saying exactly what was the disease of those people who are spoken of as 'possessed.' Medical science knows nothing of such possession; but this does not disprove the theory implied in the Gospel of the ultimate cause of diseases, many of which are cured or alleviated by psychological processes. In such cases, the personality of the curer and the faith of the patient are important elements, even as they are in the Gospel cures. The case narrated next is of a cure of 'fever.' Jesus took the sufferer by the hand and raised her up, 'and the fever left her.' In this case we have no hint of what is called a miraculous element, but in many subsequent cases, only those who attach tremendous importance to mind cures, faith-healing, and the like, can doubt that the author regarded the cures as miraculous.

We may here refer to the ingenious attempt of Wendling to show that *Mark* is a composite work. According to this theory, a writer who was essentially a narrator, wrote a terse and somewhat dry account of the Life and Death of Our Lord, starting with the call of the first four disciples. A more poetical writer took this narrative and enlarged it, introducing a number of picturesque stories and wonders, such as what we are told of John the Baptist, the temptation, the reviving of the dead girl, the transfiguration, the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, Gethsemane, the Resurrection, and also adding a number of vivid details to the stories only briefly told by his predecessor. Finally, a theologian took over the work of the narrator, as embellished by the poet, and

made further additions, relating particularly to the Messiahship, the Atonement, and the call to the Gentiles. Such a theory naturally attracts those who have a predisposition to believe that the miraculous and more theological elements in the Gospel are later additions. Obviously, however, Mark may have been a man able to narrate a simple incident simply, and yet with something of the poet and something of the theologian in him. There is, therefore, no necessity to attribute the different characteristics of the book to different authors; and the only arguments of Wendling that carry much weight are based upon certain repetitions and certain cases in which the course of the story seems to be interfered with by what may possibly be insertions. Such cases may, however, be sufficiently accounted for by the theory that our second Gospel has several sources, and that Mark did not rely exclusively, even if he relied mainly, upon the Peter tradition. Certainly, if a theologian did revise the book in the interests of theology, he made but scant use of his opportunity. The second Gospel contains singularly little of definite theological matter. If Wendling's theologian wanted to teach the doctrine of the Atonement, or the inclusion of the Gentiles, his additions seem very inadequate for his purpose; while any attempt to prove that the Messianic claim was a later addition to the Gospel story seems altogether unhistorical.

As for the miracles, Mark's Gospel has undoubtedly less of them than is to be found in those of Matthew and Luke. In particular, he more nearly limits himself to cures of one particular kind—the driving out of devils. But there are several others. The case of the palsied man in the second chapter is peculiar in that it is used as an argument. As a rule, the Mark cures are evidences of love, and Jesus is represented as wishing them to be kept secret. Here, however, He uses a cure to teach that 'the Son of Man has power to forgive sins.' This confirms the opinion that the passage ii. 1 to iii. 15 is not derived from the Petrine tradition. If Mark wrote

it, we are strengthened in the view that his Gospel was probably written after the death of Peter, and this seems on the whole most probable. The passing away of the great Apostle would naturally stimulate his 'interpreter' to put down in writing what his master could no longer orally deliver. That he should have used other accounts of the deeds or sayings of Jesus is at least plausible.

No attempt will be made here to summarize any of the four Gospels. To do so would be to tell again 'the old, old story,' familiar to us all, while to dwell upon even a few of the more striking sayings of the Master would occupy more space than we have at our disposal. It must suffice to say that the style of *Mark* is both terse and graphic. Much meaning is frequently compressed into a few words; but elaboration is also frequent, especially for the sake of vividness. There are a number of life-like touches, some of them helpful, others unnecessary, but yet suggesting the recollections of an eye-witness. Attempts have been made to prove that Mark wrote originally in Latin or in Aramaic, but neither theory has much probability. His Greek is good Hellenistic Greek, not so good as that of Luke, but better—less Hebraic—than that of Matthew, and about on a level with the Greek of Paul.

Modern discoveries indicate that Palestine was bilingual. At any rate, many of its inhabitants must have been almost equally familiar with a Greek and an Aramaic dialect. It is impossible to say which language was habitually used by Jesus.

NOTE ON CHAPTER XV

As to the order in which the first three Gospels were written, various critics have defended (1) Mark, Luke, Matthew; (2) Mark, Matthew, Luke; (3) Matthew, Luke, Mark; (4) Matthew, Mark, Luke; (5) Luke, Matthew, Mark; (6) Luke, Mark, Matthew. (1) is the view taken in this book; (2) has the support of the largest number of modern critics. That *Mark* came first; that it was used in *Matthew* and *Luke*;

that these two are independent of one another; are now generally accepted propositions. Some modern critics hold that Mark was acquainted with Q (Jülicher, von Soden, Loisy, Adeney, etc.). Others hold that Luke was acquainted with *Matthew* (Holtzmann, Weizsäcker, Allen, etc.). A few competent critics put *Mark* earlier than A.D. 64; others date the Gospel later than A.D. 71. The majority, however, place it between A.D. 65 and A.D. 70. Similarly the dates of *Luke* and *Matthew* are probably between A.D. 70 and A.D. 90; but here again ingenious arguments have been adduced in favour of a date earlier than A.D. 70, or later than A.D. 90.

That the Gospels were highly esteemed early in the second century seems clear. Hippolytus quotes from Basilides (*circa* A.D. 125) passages which imply this. Tatian's attempt to combine the four Gospels in a single narrative (*Diatessaron*) points in the same direction. The Didache (? *circa* A.D. 110) used *Matthew,* and probably *Mark* and *Luke.* Neither of these assertions admits of absolute proof, but taken together, and in combination with apparent references in Clement of Rome (*circa* A.D. 95), Ignatius (*circa* A.D. 115), Polycarp (*circa* A.D. 116), and Eusebius' quotations from Papias, they seem to dispose of the once widely held view that the Synoptic Gospels were written in the latter part of the second century. There is nothing in the nature of proof as to their authorship; but there is no sufficient reason to reject Mark and Luke as authors of the Second and Third Gospels. The venerable tradition that our first Gospel in anything like its present form was written by an Apostle, is now discarded even by conservative critics.

As to the sources of *Matthew* and *Luke,* the dominant view points to two chief documents, *Mark* and Q (Weisse, Holtzmann, B. Weiss, Sanday, Harnack, etc.). In the latter part of the nineteenth century, a strong body of critics maintained that the three Synoptists were practically independent, all relying on oral traditions, and especially on an official tradition, committed to memory among early Christians (Wetzel, Godet, Westcott, etc.). The close verbal correspondences suggest, however, common *written* sources, or else the use of one Gospel in others. It may be admitted that the sources of the Gospels were partly oral, but such traditions would naturally be eventually committed to writing. The number

of such documents; whether any of them were as lengthy as (the supposed) Q; how far written documents other than *Mark* and Q were used; and many similar points, are still undetermined. Abbott and Rushbrooke regard the matter common to the three Synoptists as approximating to an official oral tradition. This common matter would, however, provide only a very mutilated Gospel. Marshall and Rendall suggest an original Gospel in Hebrew or Aramaic, and account for many divergences by defective translations or free paraphrases from the original. Such tests as we can apply to this suggestion do not give it much support. On the whole the tendency of modern criticism favours a variety of separate oral and written sources, and lays more stress on the latter (Zahn, Stanton, Schmiedel, etc.). Many attempts have been made to reconstruct Q (Holtzmann, Wellhausen, Harnack, Hawkins, Stanton, etc.); but there is no sufficient evidence that all the more Marcan elements common to *Matthew* and *Luke* were found in one single document.

Books in English on the Synoptic Problem: Robinson's *The Study of the Gospels* (1902); Cohu's *The Gospels in the Light of Modern Research* (1909); *Oxford Studies in the Synoptic Problem* (ed. Sanday, 1911).

English Commentaries on Mark: Gould (I.C.C., 1896); Menzies, *The Earliest Gospel* (1901); Swete (1908); Allen (1915). See also B. W. Bacon, *The Beginnings of the Gospel Story* (1909), and *St. Mark, a Roman Gospel?* (1919).

CHAPTER XVI

THE EARLIEST GOSPELS—II

LUKE, FOLLOWED BY ACTS. (A.D. 70)

THE death of Paul would leave Luke free to devote himself to the task of comparing sources; of producing his great Gospel and his mis-named *Acts of the Apostles*. We cannot prove that these are actually Luke's, but the tradition that the third Gospel and the *Acts* were written by Paul's 'beloved physician' is now widely accepted by critics. It is probable that the author hoped to write a third book, and that the three were intended to be a complete history of the infant Church. The preparation for it is described in the Gospel, the founding of separate churches is narrated in *Acts*, and the third book would probably have narrated how these churches worked together as a single body. Paul's imprisonment in Rome would thus be the natural close of the second book. Or, again, we may say that the first book tells how the Gospel was inaugurated, while the second relates its wonderful Odyssey—how it was carried from Jerusalem to Rome, through Syria, Galatia, Asia, and Greece. Its hero is Paul, and the wind that blew his ship forward on its course, is the Holy Ghost. The organization of the churches, the growth of the ministry, and perhaps the Neronic persecution, would be among the subjects of the unwritten book.

Luke was probably a Gentile, and the only Gentile among the writers of the Bible. His mental temper and his outlook on Man, Nature, and Art are Hellenic. Such a phrase as 'whom . . . justice hath not suffered to live' (*Acts* xxviii. 4) might be written by a Greek, identifying justice with Zeus. On the other hand, our author never

quite understood Judaism, nor perhaps even the pure spiritualism of his own master, Paul. When the latter speaks of a message from God, Luke at once visualizes an angelic messenger, corresponding to the Iris or Hermes, with whom in his Pagan days he was familiar. Paul remains to the last a Jew, though saturated with Hellenism, while Luke is Hellene, though tinged with Hebraism. The belief that he was a Gentile is confirmed by such facts as that he frequently substitutes Greek proper names for Hebrew—*e.g.*, *Luke* vi. 15, xxiii. 33, *Acts* i. 13; and that his genealogy starts not from Abraham, or from David, but from Adam. He hardly ever refers to the Old Testament, except in recording quotations made by Jesus and others. Moreover, he uses the Greek language as one writing in his native tongue. In this respect only the *Epistle to the Hebrews* and the Johannine Gospel and Epistles could be compared with the Lucan books; and on a closer scrutiny, the Johannine Greek is seen to be more like the Greek that a foreigner with linguistic aptitude might have acquired by study. No doubt Luke's Greek has a curious dualism. It is sometimes full of Hebraisms, sometimes absolutely free from them. This may be partly due to the fact that many of his sources were in Aramaic, or translations from some Hebrew dialect. It seems, however, to spring partly from a characteristic dramatic sympathy. When Luke is describing Jews and a Jewish environment, he adopts Jewish modes of speech, which he drops as soon as he turns to the Gentile world. In the later part of *Acts*, for instance, Hebraisms practically disappear.

The belief that the author of these two books was a physician is confirmed by numerous indications of medical interest and knowledge. The weight of this evidence has, however, often been exaggerated. Dr. Hobart finds in the two books no less than four hundred medical words and phrases, hardly any of which occur anywhere else in the New Testament. But most of these four hundred do appear in the Septuagint, whence the author may have derived them. He seems, how-

ever, to be specially interested in such points as the age of a diseased person, and the duration of his illness. His tender attitude towards the sick may be the outcome of his medical experience. Statements found in Mark are often modified in Luke in such a way as to make them more conform to the medical knowledge of that time. The cumulative effect of such facts is considerable; and if we cannot prove that the author of these books was a physician, we can at least fairly say that the tradition on the subject is confirmed by internal evidence, and that there is nothing weighty to be alleged against it. That he was also a painter, and that he painted a portrait of the Virgin Mary, is a legend that cannot be traced backwards beyond the sixth century; but it is a tale not very likely to have been invented. It may be worth noticing that subjects from Luke's Gospel were among the earliest and have always been among the commonest subjects of pictures. The Good Shepherd bearing the Lost Sheep is found in the Catacombs; and the word-painter who wrote the Lucan stories of the Annunciation and the Visitation, and of the leading of the Shepherds to the Manger of Bethlehem, was an artist of no mean order. If the parables of the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son are not direct quotations of the words of the Master, they may be mentioned as further instances of word-painting. Luke also seems to have possessed a genius for friendship. He could look up enthusiastically to Paul and win from the Apostle a touching acknowledgement. But he could also write such works as his Gospel and *Acts* for the benefit of his less distinguished friend Theophilus. This seems so wonderful that many critics have assumed the Theophilus of *Luke* i. 3 and *Acts* i. 1 to be not a real person at all, but only a name, appropriate to any of God's loved ones. This is not probable. The word translated 'most excellent' was an official designation for a person of equestrian rank, and would not be applied to a typical Christian. We need not, of course, suppose that the Gospel was intended for one reader only, but there seems no suf-

ficient reason to doubt Luke's own statement that it was primarily intended for his friend, who was probably a quite recent convert (*Luke* i. 4).

Modern criticism confirms the statement that the author had before him several first-hand sources, and that he carefully investigated his evidence. If we accept his statements as to the Virgin Birth, we can hardly doubt that they must have come primarily from the Virgin Mary herself. We find no knowledge of this doctrine in the writings of Paul or Peter, in Mark's Gospel or in Q, but it does not follow that the doctrine was invented. Luke and 'Matthew' evidently received it from quite independent sources, probably before A.D. 70. If their stories be accepted as true, it seems clear that one came ultimately from Mary and the other from Joseph. The story of the Annunciation and of the *Magnificat* would presumably be included in the former. This does not imply that they came to Luke in the exact form in which he records them. Luke was an artist in words, the writer of what Renan calls 'the most beautiful book in the world.' He selects and rejects, contrasts and harmonizes. His character sketches are very vivid, though he often omits descriptive details that he had before him in *Mark*. Of this book he has borrowed nearly three quarters, with only slight modifications of matter and style. Sometimes he improves the Greek. Sometimes his alterations seem intended for the benefit of a reader unacquainted with the geography or the customs of Palestine. Sometimes he alters the medical details, substituting professional language for that of a layman. Presumably his method of dealing with Q and other sources was much the same as that which he adopted in dealing with *Mark*, for it was the method we should expect from an educated truth-loving writer, with a feeling for style, and little of our modern demand for accuracy. He would put into the mouths of his characters what seemed to him suitable words, and expect Theophilus to understand that he was not literally reporting them. In the *Magnificat* and other canticles he

wrote neither as a reporter nor as an inventor. He no doubt obtained the materials from one of his many sources, and worked them up into their present form. In these canticles the diction is very reminiscent of the Septuagint, but we cannot say whether this was so in his sources, or whether it was a result of the sympathy which led him to adapt his style to his characters and their environment.

Luke is not only the most literary, it is also the most historical, of the Gospels. This, however, is not saying much. The writing of history, in the modern sense, was not dreamed of in the first century. Luke is not an historian like Acton or Gardiner, nor even like his own contemporary Tacitus. His authorities were meagre. He paid very little attention to dates, and he regards his subject more as glad tidings of beautiful and holy things than as a mere record of facts. Yet if we compare him with the other Evangelists, we must regard him as an historian of no mean order. He realizes the Syrian and Roman background. He resolutely starts with the beginning of the life of Jesus, and carries it through with a sort of completeness.

Mark was mainly concerned with the message, and he therefore starts with the preliminary messenger. 'Matthew' writes largely to prove that Jesus was the expected Messiah of the Jews. He therefore begins with His descent from David and Abraham; but Luke first of all states his own purpose and qualifications, and then proceeds to deal directly with the incidents which led up to the Birth and Infancy of Jesus. His Gospel is much the most comprehensive of the four. The contents of the Synoptics have been divided into one hundred and seventy-two sections. Of these it is found that forty-eight are found in *Luke* only, twenty-two in *Matthew* only, five in *Mark* only. This illustrates the extent to which Mark's narrative was incorporated by his successors, as well as the greater comprehensiveness of Luke, who also perhaps brings out best the universality of the Gospel. To him Jesus is not so much the Jewish

Messiah as the Saviour of men, the satisfier of all human needs. And among *men* he includes the sex which Jews and Gentiles alike were apt to disparage or to ignore. To Luke the daughters of Jerusalem are not less important than the sons; a fact the more noteworthy when we consider the attitude taken on sex questions by his master Paul. And Luke's sympathy towards women is discriminating. He alone records the story of the ringing vindication of Mary in the face of Martha's accusation.

Similarly, Luke seems best to echo the peculiar interest which his Master ever showed in the poor, the outcast, and the oppressed. He alone gives us the parables of Dives and Lazarus, of the Good Samaritan, the Rich Fool, and the Prodigal Son. He alone tells how Jesus rebuked those who would have Him call down fire from heaven upon His enemies, with the words: 'Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.' Whoever originated the *Magnificat,* its revolutionary sentiments and its reversal of conventional judgments are altogether in the spirit of Luke. On the other hand, he does not give us the wonderful 'Come unto Me'; yet it will hardly be suggested that if this most moving and characteristic Saying of Jesus had appeared in any of Luke's sources he would have omitted it.

Clearly realizing that Christianity is essentially ethical, he omits several incidents open to criticism from the side of morality—*e.g.*, Mark's curious tradition that Jesus once cursed a fig tree because it bore no fruit, and this at a time when fruit would have been unseasonable; and again that He once spoke of the Gentiles as if they were dogs, hardly worth the healing. Of New Testament writers, Luke has most sense of humour. A gentle irony and a genuine sympathy unite in his descriptions of grotesque situations and singular characters.

The date of Luke's Gospel is difficult to fix. One group of critics places it before Paul's liberation from his first Roman captivity. This is chiefly in order to account for the point at which *Acts* breaks off. The

theory that Luke intended to write a third book provides a more plausible explanation. Such facts as that the Second Advent is represented as something that will take place before the generation to which Jesus had spoken had passed away, and that the word Christ is used as a title rather than as a proper name, undoubtedly suggest an early date. But I do not know that the difference between A.D. 61, the earliest possible date for *Acts*, and A.D. 69, the date I suggest for the Gospel, is seriously affected by either of these considerations. On the other hand, if we put *Acts* in A.D. 61, we must give Luke's Gospel a still earlier date, and put Mark earlier again. This is unlikely. The fact that Paul had apparently neither heard of nor read any of the Gospels seems almost decisive. Another set of critics puts Luke's Gospel as late as A.D. 79-81; but an author writing after the Fall of Jerusalem would surely have made some allusion to so marvellous a fulfilment of many of the prophecies which he recorded; and he would probably have also offered some explanation of the apparent non-fulfilment of others. Taking everything into consideration, I do not hesitate to put both the Gospel and *Acts* between the death of Paul in about A.D. 65, and the Fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. I suspect that the task of writing these books was taken in hand shortly after the former event, perhaps in A.D. 67, and was not completed before A.D. 69 or 70. The fact that Luke did not use *Matthew* suggests that probably the latter came later. This, of course, raises the question: Why did not 'Matthew' use *Luke?* But we have no reason to suppose that the former made anything like the same diligent search into, and attempt to collect and correlate, all existing sources. It is right, however, to say that the question of the date of both *Matthew* and *Luke* are still quite undecided, and that a good case may be made out for treating them as practically contemporaneous.

It ought, perhaps, to be mentioned that Marcion and his followers attributed to Luke a Gospel far shorter than the *Luke* which we know. Modern critics, however, hold

almost unanimously that Marcion's was a shortened form of the original, deliberately abridged for doctrinal purposes. All the characteristics of Luke's style are found in the parts that Marcion omitted, as markedly as in those which he accepted. It is incredible that a later writer could have so successfully imitated the author.

The Acts of the Apostles. (A.D. 70)

This book might more accurately be called the Acts of Paul down to the time of his first Roman captivity, preceded by a brief sketch of Christianity in its earliest days, and more especially of certain acts of Peter. The other Apostles are hardly mentioned. Most of them are not even referred to by name. There is no attempt at a biography, even of Paul. We have an account of his missionary and church-founding activities, rather than a formal life. *Luke* was chiefly concerned with the history of the Church. Its foundations are laid in the Gospel narrative; but the actual formation of various churches is the main subject of *Acts*. The gospel is carried from Jerusalem into Samaria, then onward into Syria and the adjacent provinces. Thence it passes into Europe. At length the great missionary is taken a prisoner to the world's capital, where he evolves that ideal of a Catholic Church which was to be partly realized in the succeeding centuries.

It seems strange that Luke and Paul, companions in missionary work and warmly attached to one another, should in their literary work have been so independent. There is no sort of evidence that the beloved physician had read any of the Epistles of his master, or that the Apostle knew of the materials which his disciple was collecting for his Gospel and for its sequel. We can imagine that Paul was too much engrossed in his own gigantic task to concern himself greatly with Luke's literary activities, which may indeed have hardly begun before the death of the great Apostle to the Gentiles. But we still have to face the curious fact that the diligent

Evangelist, busily collecting and comparing available sources of information, made no use of his master's letters. The apparent discrepancies between *Acts* and *Galatians* may be somehow reconcilable; but we can hardly suppose that Luke would have written as he did if he had had the *Epistle to the Galatians* before his eyes. We can only suppose that the Epistles were cherished in the archives of the churches to which they were addressed, but not published or widely circulated till a later date. No one realized their full significance, or guessed that Scriptures, at least as precious as the sacred books of the Old Testament, were being hurriedly dictated to meet temporary and local needs, under the inspiration of the Divine Spirit, and for the benefit of Christians in all ages.

In studying the history of the infant Church, recent critics have been greatly struck by the analogies between Christianity and certain Oriental mystical religions which were especially dominant in the scenes of Paul's early labours. Undoubtedly the need of 'a Saviour' was widely felt in the Empire, from Rome to the far East. In all ages men have been conscious of the need of *individual* salvation; but in this first century there seemed to be a special craving for one who should save *society* from the miserable condition into which it had fallen. The world was not perhaps more evil than in earlier or in later times; but there was a greater consciousness of its misery. Perhaps the Roman peace, imposed by the sword, had given men leisure in which to muse upon the sorrows of the world. Then again, the destruction of national liberties and independence had created new grievances. Liberty had often meant licence, lawlessness, and local tyranny; but its loss was none the less resented. The conquests and civil wars of the century preceding the Birth of Christ had aggravated the discontent, while the great increase of wealth had embittered the poor, and many who sympathized with them. Emperor worship was in some sense an expression of this longing for a Saviour. Individual emperors might be vile; yet to the

secular mind the Emperor represented the one hope of social betterment. Under Augustus there appeared a real basis for such a hope. He had made an end of the civil wars; and his administrative reforms had made life seem worth living to some of those who had lost heart in the previous years. Augustus had begun to set things straight, and much might be hoped from such an inauguration. But these hopes soon began to fade, especially under emperors in whom greed, vice, and violence were incarnate. The world was thus prepared for the message of a coming king, not earthly but heavenly, a king who would be the friend of the poor and the oppressed. Jesus had lived as a peasant-prophet, and had been crucified by the rich and powerful whom He denounced; but God had raised Him from the dead. He had ascended into Heaven, and would soon return to make all things new—as a Saviour but also as a Judge. Thus the appeal was made to men's fears as well as to their hopes. Christianity was at once glad tidings of salvation, and a terrible call to self-examination, repentance, and purification.

The new creed fitted in well, moreover, with another group of facts. Many of the religions which were permeating the eastern parts of the empire were connected with myths, based upon the apparent death of winter and the vernal revival. This process was personified in tales of dying and reviving gods. When the River Orontes was flooded in early spring, and its waters were reddened by the clay washed from its banks, men said: 'This is the blood of Adonis. Year by year he is slain by the wild boar, and he rises again from the dead.' At Antioch a wooden image of Adonis was solemnly buried and, a few days later, raised up out of the grave, to the cry: 'Adonis lives again.' Those who had wildly lamented over his interment, now entered by sympathy into his joy, and were supposed to become mystically partakers of his restored life. To the men and women of Antioch, accustomed to this ritual, came the Christian missionaries, with their tale of a Dying and Resurrecting God.

The analogy did not cease here. We cannot say positively how soon the Christian Sacraments came to include any identification of the believer with his Lord. In the fourth Gospel it is implied that this was always the case in the Eucharist. By eating the Flesh and drinking the Blood of the Master, Christians became one with Him and He with them. Paul imported the same idea into Baptism. As the convert descended into the river to be immersed, he was mystically dying, and being buried with Jesus. Then, coming up out of the water, he was mystically rising with Christ to the heavenly life of righteousness. Whether this mystical side of the sacraments was in any degree suggested by oriental mystical religions is doubtful, but at least possible. The analogies of the dying and resurrecting gods were further reinforced by further analogies of initiatory rites, whereby the believer participated in the life of the god. The Eucharist, if originally a memorial thanksgiving, soon came to bear some resemblance to rites by which the initiated renewed and sustained those privileges into which they had been initiated. No Christian need hesitate to believe that these mystical religions were attempts to meet real and deep human needs, needs which Christianity came to satisfy. But when we look for proof of any borrowing by the early Church from these oriental cults, we find little positive evidence in favour of such borrowing; and we are faced by the negative fact that neither in *Acts,* nor in any of the *early* Epistles of Paul, do we find any hints of such interaction. The relation of Christianity to Judaism, to idolatry, and even to Greek philosophy is plainly implied, and sometimes fully discussed. Paul argues with Stoics and Epicureans, as well as with the Judaisers and idolaters; but he nowhere contrasts Jesus with Adonis, or compares what he considers true sacraments with what he regards as false. In his later Epistles, he attacks the doctrines which afterwards grew into Gnosticism, but this rather suggests that Christianity, far from borrowing from Eastern religions, was invaded by the latter

in the early sixties, after Paul's sacramental system was fully developed. It is not in *Thessalonians*, *Corinthians*, *Galatians*, or *Romans* that we find ourselves in contact with oriental mysticism, but in *Colossians* and the subsequent Epistles. The silence of *Acts* on such subjects continues till the end of the book. It seems as if Luke, with his solid though poetical mind, hardly realized the presence of germs of Gnosticism in the Church, even after his master, with more subtle insight, had awakened to the danger. Luke was essentially a Hellene, and not an Oriental. He faced life with Hellenic lucidity and Hellenic limitations; and he was little interested in the growth of mysticism in the world around him.

The book of *Acts* falls naturally into three sections. In the earliest of these (*Acts* i. to xii.), Peter rather than Paul is the hero of the narrative, and in this section it seems clear that Luke's evidence is not that of an eye-witness, or even that of a person in close touch with the incidents narrated. Presumably, as in the case of the third Gospel, he compiled the earlier parts of *Acts* from various sources, written as well as oral, but probably chiefly the latter. At the other extreme is the 'We' section (xvi. to xxviii.), in which the writer practically claims to have been an eye-witness. Modern research has confirmed this claim by proving the accuracy of the story in many points that were formerly questioned. We may, therefore, assume that in this portion of *Acts* Luke relied altogether upon his memory and upon his own notes of the journeys. Intermediate are those parts relating to Paul, where the author does not speak in the first person. Here he would no doubt have had plentiful means of getting at the facts from his personal intimacy with the Apostle and his colleagues. For this section of *Acts* Luke probably relied chiefly on oral testimony. He may have had also some written sources, but this is doubtful.

There are many coincidences between *Acts* and the Pauline Epistles which seem obviously unintentional. On the other hand, there are passages which we are unable to reconcile. Such differences are natural in

independent works; but it is difficult to suppose that some of them would not have been avoided if either writer had had the work of the other before his eyes. It is possible that Luke had read the Epistles, but had fixed his attention on the principles which they laid down, rather than upon their incidental references to historical facts, and that he forgot the latter in writing his narrative. Such discrepancies as exist favour an earlier date. The later the date of *Acts*, the greater becomes the probability that the writer would have made more use of the Pauline Epistles, since the latter rapidly attained a considerable circulation, and would naturally be regarded as highly authoritative.

The chief differences between *Acts* and the Pauline Epistles fall under three heads—namely, inconsistencies about (1) the early travels of Paul; (2) his visit to Jerusalem; (3) the attitude of Peter in the controversy between Gentiles and Judaizers. The first class is sufficiently accounted for by the theory that neither writer gives a full account of the journeys. Each of them naturally mentions some incidents which were passed over by the other. The second difficulty can only be satisfactorily met by the assumption that *Galations* ii. and *Acts* xv. do not refer to the same visit. As to the third class of inconsistencies, the differences are accounted for by the difference in the aims of the two writers. Paul is anxious to prove his independence of the Twelve, and he naturally lays stress upon his opposition to Peter; though it is noteworthy that he implies that Peter's alliance with the Judaizers was only a temporary falling away from the more liberal policy. Luke, on the other hand, is anxious to show the essential agreement of the two great Apostles. He does not mention their brief divergences. He lays stress rather on Peter's share in promoting the admission of the Gentiles into the Church. I consider it impossible to reconcile the received text of 'things strangled' (*Acts* xxi. 25), with the silence of Paul on the subject; but this difficulty disappears if we regard the words as an interpolation. Paul would not criticize a

decree which forbade idolatry, violence, and fornication, and treated them as utterly barring baptism.

Of the sources of *Acts*, whether written or oral, we know practically nothing; though a number of more or less ingenious guesses have been made. It is unlikely that Luke had *many* written narratives to help him. He makes no allusion to such, as he does in the case of his Gospel. The motives which would have induced many Christians to record *logia* of Jesus, hardly existed in the case of incidents that occurred in the early years of Christianity, especially as men expected a speedy winding up of the dispensation by the Second Advent. On the other hand, the oral sources would naturally be fuller and more abundant. Less time had elapsed; fewer of the eye-witnesses would have been removed by death. Luke had many friends among those who had played a part in the events he was recording. Philip, Mark, Timothy, and others were probably well known to him; and if, as I imagine, he was long engaged in collecting materials for his books, he would have had plenty of opportunities for doing so. Beyond this we can only guess, but it is worth noticing that the speeches of Stephen and Peter in the early part of *Acts* imply a much more primitive atmosphere than that in which Paul's companions lived. Their verbal Hebraisms are in the style that Luke habitually uses in dealing with a Judaic environment, but their substance must have been largely derived from men who were living in Palestine in the thirties. Some of their obscurities are no doubt due to the fact that documents cannot be cross-examined.

Many critics believe that Luke wrote his account of the Acts of the Apostles in two different forms—one much longer than the other; and that this accounts for the extraordinary divergences in the manuscript of *Acts* which has come down to us. Of this theory it must suffice to say that it is plausible, but unproved. Any adequate discussion of it would occupy many pages without leading to any safe conclusion.

NOTE ON CHAPTER XVI

Luke is dated by a few critics as early as A.D. 55; by many competent judges between A.D. 60 and A.D. 70; between A.D. 70 and A.D. 80, or between A.D. 80 and A.D. 90. The modern authorities favouring each of these three decades are of about equal weight. Many early critics and a few recent ones give the probable date as between A.D. 90 and A.D. 100. A few put it even later, but these seem to be influenced by their strong bias against the miraculous. The suggestion that the death of Paul (A.D. 65) set Luke free to compose his narrative, and that he compiled both the Gospel and *Acts* in the five years immediately following is at least plausible.

The Preface to *Luke* suggests the use of both oral and written sources, but there is little agreement among critics who have tried to distinguish sources other than Mark and Q. The archaic and other linguistic characteristics of—*e.g.*, i. 5 to ii. 52 have been attributed to early Palestinian sources (Bruce, Plummer, etc.); but they may be due to deliberate literary art. This would imply that the author understood Aramaic, which is not improbable. Hilgenfeld and others regard the more Aramaic phrases as interpolations. There are similar difficulties about other passages, especially about the section ix. 51 to xviii. 14.

English Commentaries: Plummer (I.C.C., 1896); Garvie (W.N.T., 1911); Adeney (C.B., 1901). Selwyn, *St. Luke the Prophet* (1901); Harnack, *Luke the Physician* (1907); Lumis, *How Luke was Written* (1915), may also be consulted.

Acts.—The main objections to the Lucan authorship of *Acts* are: (1) The ignoring of the Pauline Epistles; (2) The alleged dependence of parts of *Acts* on Josephus; (3) The miraculous elements. Critics who regard these as legends generally give a late date to *Acts*. (4) Certain alleged inaccuracies as to Paul's attitude towards Judaism, as compared with *Galatians* ii. To the above it is replied: (1) Luke might have had no copies or intimate knowledge of Paul's Epistles. A much later writer of *Acts* would be less likely to ignore them. On the other hand, the 'undesigned coincidences' (Paley, *Horæ Paulinæ*) between the *Acts* and the Epistles, would be what we should expect in a contemporary, but not in

a later writer. (2) The dependence on Josephus is highly questionable. There are parallelisms, but also contradictions. (3) This argument will only influence those who reject Miracles. Moreover, legends of the miraculous grow up and circulate very rapidly. (4) This is the weightiest of the objections; but plausible explanations of the alleged contradictions have been adduced. To these we may add : (5) The accuracy of some political and geographical allusions suggests that the author was a contemporary and an eye-witness of what he describes (Harnack, Ramsay, etc.). The account of Paul's shipwreck provides strong internal evidence of having been written by one of the shipwrecked party, as is shown in Smith's *Voyage and Shipwreck of St. Paul.* (6) The absence of any second century colouring. (7) The tradition of the Lucan authorship is strong, and was undisputed in early times. (8) The diction of *Acts* resembles that of *Luke*. This, however, only indicates common authorship, and is no argument against those who place both books in the second century.

English Commentaries on *Acts:* Stokes (Ex. B., 1893); Lumby (C.G.T., 1899); Knowling (Ex. G.T., 1901); Rackham (W.C., 1910). Ramsay's Works (see Bibliography); Schmiedel's article in Enc. Bib.; Chase, *The Credibility of the Book of the Acts of the Apostles* (1902); and Gardner in *Cambridge Biblical Essays* (ed. Swete, 1909) are very valuable.

CHAPTER XVII

BOOKS CONNECTED WITH THE FALL OF JERUSALEM

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS. (A.D. 70)
THE MATTHEW GOSPEL. (A.D. 72)

THE Fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, with the destruction of the Temple, was a stupendous crisis in the life and religion of those Christians who were still Jews, and who, living under the shadow of the Temple, had continued in constant touch with the Mosaic ritual and sacrifices. What were they to do if the Temple was dismantled, if the sacrifices ceased, if they themselves were driven from the Holy City? It would be natural enough that when such a crisis was imminent, an inspired writer should issue a manifesto for the encouragement of these Jewish Christians, to remind them that they would still have a High Priest and an altar, and to show them that all Judaism was summed up and rendered superfluous by the New Dispensation. We cannot actually prove that the *Epistle to the Hebrews* was written just before the Fall of Jerusalem, or addressed to the Christian Jews of the Holy City; but the internal evidence seems to leave little room for doubt on the subject. The author was almost certainly a Hellenistic Jewish Christian who had never been to Jerusalem, but was intimately aquainted with the Septuagint, and especially with all the Tabernacle ritual. Apollos, who is described in *Acts* xviii. 24 as an Alexandrian Jew, an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures, fulfils these conditions. So, perhaps, does the lady Priscilla, the instructress of Apollos (*Acts* xviii. 26). The fact that she was a woman might explain the unique anonymity

of this Epistle; and perhaps also the intuitional manner in which conclusions are reached without regard for the processes of ordinary logic. Paul, Barnabas, Luke, Philip the Deacon, and Clement of Rome have all been suggested as possible authors of the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, but all these suggestions seem to break down on some essential, or almost essential, point.

The Epistle is plainly addressed not to Hebrews generally, but to some special body of Hebrews, for it contains personal references that would otherwise be inappropriate (xiii. 23, 24). There is no mention made of circumcision, or of any obligation to obey the law. The very existence of the Gentile world is ignored. The Incarnation is treated as if it were intended exclusively for the benefit of the seed of Abraham (ii. 16). The Church in Jerusalem was the only Church to which such a method of writing would be appropriate. The one weighty argument against the theory that the letter was sent to Jerusalem is that this church was exceptionally poor, and that, nevertheless, the Hebrews addressed in the Epistle are commended for their bounty to others. But it is not unlikely that some wealthy Jewish Christians might have come to live in the Holy City, and have sent alms to the poor elsewhere.

That the writer used the Greek and not the Hebrew version of the Old Testament is clear from the fact that some of the arguments depend on the Septuagint, as opposed to the Hebrew reading. But the Greek version must have been well known in Jerusalem, and the author probably used this because it was the only version familiar to him. The references to an approaching catastrophe become more full of significance if we take the letter as written just before the Fall of Jerusalem. The underlying thought seems to be 'You are Jews, living under the shadow of the Temple. You love and are familiar with its services. To you God's promises are especially given. Now that the Roman armies are marching upon Jerusalem, I see no hope of victory for you against them, but I can point you to a greater

victory. Your prophets and psalmists were showing you fragments of the mind of God, but I remind you that One greater than they has revealed God fully; that your Temple worship was essentially transitory, although it symbolized the Eternal; that your priests and their sacrifices, though divinely instituted, could not take away sin, but that there is a High Priest whose self-sacrifice effects a real deliverance. You have now to choose whether you will fix your hearts on your old sacred but transitory Levitical system, or will come with your Redeemer "without the camp" (xiii. 13), and be crucified with Him, so that with Him you may rise again. Think of the faith of your fathers; and notice that it was not faith in a visible system, but faith in the invisible, in principles, in ideals, in the unseen God.'

If this point of view be kept in mind, the argument in most places becomes pellucid; and much of what remains obscure to an English reader may be understood in the light of the accepted principles of the Alexandrian rhetorical schools. Perhaps the siege of Jerusalem had already begun. Perhaps the Temple services were already suspended. These are mere hypotheses, but they would add a new solemnity to the appeal.

Chapter I. contrasts the partial fragmentary messages of the prophets with the complete revelation of a Son, Who is Himself the perfect revelation of the Father, and the Purifier of souls. He is above all angels, as the prophets and psalmists proclaimed.

Chapter II. shows that a greater obligation is entailed by a greater revelation; and that the Old Testament conception of the Messiah included perfection through suffering, and glorification through humiliation, as well as a personality tempted to sin, and yet of complete sinlessness. Only One Who combines all these is fit to be at once our Legislator and our High Priest—our Moses and our Aaron.

Chapters III. to V. apply the above tests to Jesus. He is our Moses, but with the difference that the old Moses was a servant, not a son; and that the rest he

provided was not to abide. Similarly Jesus is our Aaron, but more than Aaron. He was human like Aaron, and like Aaron ordained of God; but He was a priest of a higher order, the order of Melchisedec.

CHAPTERS V. 11 to VI. 15 are a digression. The author evidently feels that he is approaching dangerous ground in depreciating the Aaronic system. He urges that theology must be progressive. The great peril is retrogression, due to lack of hope, faith, or patience. We must trust in God and persevere as did Abraham. So shall we, like Jesus, pass through the veil.

CHAPTER VII. resumes the argument, explaining that the priesthood of Melchisedec, unlike the Aaronic priesthood, cannot depend on father or mother, or have either beginning or end. We need a high priest who shall be not only 'holy, guileless, undefiled,' but also 'perfected for evermore.' In other words, the Melchisedec priesthood rests wholly upon righteousness, not upon any formal ordination; and it involves the offering of self as the sacrifice.

CHAPTER VIII. carries on the comparison. The Aaronic priesthood was necessarily earthly and imperfect. The Tabernacle and all that pertained thereto were admitted from the first to be only the pattern of the Eternal Verities; and Jeremiah had promised a covenant which should supersede the Mosaic, a covenant under which God should write His Laws, not on tables of stone, but in the hearts of men. Then all, from the least to the greatest, will know Him, and their sins will be forgiven. The Mosaic system is already vanishing, for the Temple is on the eve of destruction.

CHAPTER IX. shows in more detail the transitory character of the Levitical system. The fact that only one priest might enter the Holy of Holies, and this only once a year, shows that access to God was very partial under the old system. The new system makes it universal, and substitutes spiritual sacrifice for material. The necessity of the Crucifixion was indicated by the Levitical requirement of the shedding of blood, but the blood of

animals cannot wash away sin. For this a more perfect blood was required. A Rabbinical argument borrowed from Paul is introduced in verses 16 and 17.

CHAPTER X. 1-18 sums up the above argument, and defends it by means of quotations from the Old Testament.

CHAPTERS X. 19 to XII. 29 pass from argument to exhortation. Use your privileges; stand unselfishly together in the coming catastrophe. Consider how horrible a thing apostasy at such a crisis would be. Remember the courage and love that you have shown in the past, and the example of the saints of old—the countless heroes of faith—and the sufferings they bravely endured. Also, above all, remember what Jesus suffered. You have not resisted unto blood; and you must not forget that suffering is often a necessary part of education. Seek peace and sanctification, and resist temptation, lest all chance of repentance be lost. For our God is a consuming fire.

CHAPTER XIII. deals in greater detail with the duties of Christians, ethical (1-6) and doctrinal (7-9). We still have an altar, even though the altar in the Temple is about to be destroyed. Our sin-offering, like the Mosaic, was carried outside the camp—*i.e.*, Jerusalem. Take your part in the law of sacrifice. Offer deeds of kindness and unselfishness so that your spiritual rulers will be able to render a joyful account of the trust confided to them. The writer then asks for the prayers of the Hebrews, and promises reciprocal prayers. He announces that Timothy has been liberated, and hopes to visit them soon. Greetings from them 'of Italy' follow, and a benediction concludes the Epistle.

This brief summary inadequately illustrates how greatly the *Epistle to the Hebrews* gains in force, if we assume that it was addressed to the Christian Hebrews of Jerusalem when the fall of that city was imminent. The opening verse, for instance, represents the New Revelation as taking place 'at the end of these days'—*i.e.*, at the end of the dispensation which the destruction of the Temple was to wind up. Nevertheless, this view is still

disputed. One ingenious interpretation suggests that the Epistle was probably written from Cæsarea by Philip the Deacon, at the time when Paul was in prison there; and that its object was the reconciliation of the Pauline and Judaic parties. But this theory gives no adequate explanation of that expectation of a catastrophe which seems to brood over the Epistle. Another interpretation dates the Epistle as late as A.D. 95, and considers that its object was to warn men against certain heresies. But the assumption throughout *Hebrews* is that the Temple services are still going on (ix. 8). The references to persecution seem hardly appropriate either to the period before A.D. 69, or to one in which Christian martyrdom, even unto death, was common.

Jesus is contrasted in turns with angels, with Moses, and with Aaron. He is an angel, but far above those usually so called. He is a law-giver, far above Moses; a priest, far above Aaron. A saving faith does not, however, imply any knowledge of Christian doctrine; in fact, the enumerated heroes of faith are men who lived before the Incarnation, Crucifixion, and Resurrection. Their faith in Christ was belief in righteousness, and readiness to sacrifice themselves. Christianity is the perfect religion, because it offers such full and direct access to God without any intermediary priesthood sacrifices, ritual, or other characteristics of the Temple worship. Hence comes the antithesis between the Holy Place and the Most Holy. The one puts God at a distance, interposing a veil that is to shroud Him in mystery. The other brings Him near to us, through Jesus, Who is not only divine, but also our example and forerunner. He has gone into the very presence of God, and we may all follow Him thither.

I will now pass from the general argument to some special points in the Epistle. One of these is its extraordinary severity. Thus, we are told in one place that it is impossible to renew again, unto repentance, anyone who falls away after having 'tasted the good word of God' (vi. 4-8). Those who quote this terrible passage to

prove that there is no possibility of repentance after death —at any rate for those who have once been Christians —should notice that on their system of interpretation, the words imply much more than they themselves accept. Nothing is said about dying. If the words do imply any impossibility of repentance, they apply to *living* apostates. Some heretics in the ensuing centuries understood the words so, and refused to admit apostates to any Christian privileges. The author of the *Epistle to the Hebrews* is, however, speaking, not of possibilities of repentance, but of his own power to 'renew' apostates 'unto repentance.' A Christian teacher begins with first principles, and then passes on to deeper truths. If one whom he has taught 'unto perfection' afterwards falls away, the whole work has been a failure; but it does not follow that *God* cannot 'renew' such an apostate. The terrible words must be interpreted by their context, and by the general principles of the Gospels, and of this particular writer. They remain an awful warning against apostasy. Those who fall away after being fully enlightened, 'crucify to themselves, the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame.' They are compared to ground which has been well watered, and yet has borne only thorns and thistles, 'whose end is to be burned.' If we wish to push the analogy further, we may regard the burning of the thistles as done for the fertilizing of the land.

The Christology of the *Epistle to the Hebrews* is almost identical with that which Paul had taught from his prison in Rome. To both writers Jesus is, ethically, the exact counterpart of His Father. In both, His exaltation is attributed to His virtues—'Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity' (i. 9). In both He is represented as Divine and Pre-existent—'Of the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever' (i. 8). 'And thou Lord in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thy hands' (i. 10). A modern critic might object that in the Psalm from which these words are quoted, the reference

is to Jehovah; but we are concerned only with the meaning of the author whom we are studying, and he clearly held that the words were spoken by the Father of the Son. He does not attempt to correlate them with other passages, such as the assertion that 'Jesus because of the suffering of death (was) crowned with glory and honour' (ii. 9). The suffering of death was only the manifestation of a spirit of self-sacrifice which was an element of the nature of Christ from the beginning; and since He is the radiance of the glory, and the express image of God, a self-sacrificing Deity is plainly implied. Similarly the sacrifice of self, though offered once for all in the world of time and space, is perpetually offered in Heaven, the realm of permanent realities, beyond time and space.

Like Paul, this author shows little interest in the earthly life of Jesus, but there are many indications that he was familiar with at least one of the Gospels, probably *Mark*. He refers to the temptation and agony, to the opposition which Jesus encountered, to His gentleness towards sinners, to his work as a preacher, and to the disciples He gathered round Him. If he nowhere refers to the miracles and the parables, it is probably because they had no bearing on his argument. His concern is simply with the fact that the Son of God lived an heroic and pathetic life on earth, showing us the principles on which we too should live, reaching glory through humiliation.

The Melchisedec priesthood can only be understood by keeping it closely connected in our minds with the idea of exaltation because of righteousness (i. 9). The very word Melchisedec means a King of Righteousness, and his kingdom is of Salem, that is, of Peace. All other priesthoods, whether ordained by anointing or by the laying on of hands, are subordinate (v. 1-4). Moses, Aaron, and even Abraham were of a lower grade (vii. 4-10). The Levitical Law made nothing perfect (vii. 19); but Christ cleanses the conscience (ix. 14), and 'hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified' (x. 14).

The word faith is used in this Epistle in a wider and

more inclusive sense than Paul's; but not at all in the sense in which James employs it. It has little, if anything, to do with creed or belief, and it is identified not so much with trust as with spiritual intuition. Faith is our justification for believing what in our best moments are our highest hopes. It is the test by which we judge our ideals (xi. 1). It is the ground on which we believe that the worlds were created by God (xi. 3). It is the common characteristic of the heroes of the Old Testament (xi. 4-33). This view of faith includes Paul's. Trust in God is a prominent element in the heroes and heroines of *Hebrews* xi. But we are given in this Epistle a more philosophical account of it, as was natural if, as we suppose, the author had studied in Alexandria, and so been brought under the influence of the Platonic philosophy. That he is also influenced by Pauline teaching is sufficiently obvious. Thus in x. 37, 38, he uses Paul's favourite quotation from Habakkuk; and though this might be a mere coincidence, the number of parallel passages in the two writers is too great to be accidental. This Epistle frequently takes over and then expands a Pauline thought. It is, perhaps, a case where Paul planted and Apollos watered (*I. Cor.* iii. 6); or if not Apollos, then some other Alexandrian.

Little light is thrown by *Hebrews* on the ecclesiastical arrangements of the Church. This is natural enough, if the letter was addressed to the quite exceptional organization in Jerusalem. Considerable emphasis is laid upon obedience to ecclesiastical superiors. The passage 'Remember them that had the rule over you, which spake unto you the word of God' probably refers to the original Twelve, and perhaps suggests that none of them were now left in Jerusalem. The words in xiii. 17 refer to the existing authorities: 'Obey them that have the rule over you and submit to them, for they watch in behalf of your souls.' The word translated *watch* perhaps suggests that they lie awake at night, anxious as to how the flock will endure the coming trial. The Epistle is, on our theory, written mainly to help Jewish Christians

to bear the dissolution of the Old Dispensation by showing that the latter, though God-given, was partial and temporary; while Christianity, the New Dispensation, is permanent. The elaborate contrast between Judaism and Christianity is, however, in a sense subordinate to the exhortation. The author's aim is primarily practical. He writes to help the Hebrew Christians through the great crisis. He writes to warn and to encourage them to hold fast to Christianity, in spite of persecution and the destruction of the Holy City.

Our Altar is primarily the Cross of Christ, and secondarily the whole world. The place for self-sacrifice is everywhere. But there may be a reference to the Lord's Table. The author is certainly a sacramentalist, to whom the visible suggests the invisible. He never loses touch either with things temporal or with things eternal. He visualizes abstractions like a poet or a painter. In Jewish rites he finds symbols of spiritual doctrines, but these are thought of as concrete. Thus the self-sacrifice of Christ is the entry of a High Priest into the holiest part of the Temple; and He is also the victim offered up to God.

It is right to add that many modern critics reject the theory that the Epistle was addressed to the Jerusalem Church; on the ground that it is written in Greek and in an Alexandrian spirit. We cannot, however, assume that a Greek-speaking and Alexandrian author would adapt his language and his methods of thought to those of the Church which he was addressing.

The Gospel according to St. Matthew. (A.D. 72)

In the third and fourth centuries it was certainly thought that Matthew the Apostle had writen a Gospel, and Irenæus in the second century held the same belief. Earlier in the second century Papias mentions the *logia* of Matthew. All the early traditions speak of Matthew's Gospel or *logia* as originally written in Hebrew; but competent authorities now hold that the first Gospel

is not a translation. Almost all the ablest of them add that it is based upon *Mark*, and that such material as comes from other sources is fitted into the *Mark* framework.

It is hardly credible that an Apostle, one of the original Twelve, should have thus composed his Gospel. Still more incredible is it that he translated the *Mark* portions into Hebrew, and that the re-translator of the book into Greek should in so many cases have hit upon the exact phraseology of the original *Mark*. No moderately competent critic would believe that Matthew wrote the Gospel as we have it, unless unduly biassed by a strong desire to attribute the work to an Apostle. Many of the modern scholars who are most strongly animated by such a desire have yet been compelled to let the evidence over-ride their bias. We have, therefore, to abandon the full and literal accuracy of the tradition, but we need not depart from very close adherence to it. We may still believe that Matthew the Apostle wrote down certain *logia* in Aramaic, and that the later compiler of the Gospel used these *logia* freely, in addition to *Mark* and other sources.

What was such a Gospel to be called? If the author's name was unknown, the fact that he had used the Matthew *logia* would suggest the title we have. 'According to Matthew' implies, not that Matthew was the author, but that the book belonged to the Matthew tradition. This might indicate that Deutero-Matthew had modified *Mark* in a Judaic or Matthew-ward direction. One curious manuscript attributes the translation into Greek to James, and another further identifies him with James the brother of the Lord. As evidence, these statements are of very little value; but they may be founded on some early tradition that if not James, it was some companion of James in the Jerusalem Church who was the author. The problem is complicated rather than simplified by the fact that a lost document, called the *Gospel according to the Hebrews,* was translated by Jerome, attributed to Matthew by the sect of the Nazar-

enes, and quoted by some of the Fathers. If that lost document is ever discovered, it may throw unexpected light on the subject. It is possible, though not probable, that this Gospel was that Hebrew Gospel which Papias believed Matthew to have written; but it was more probably an independent narrative, derived from some of the sources used by our Synoptics, and probably also from some other sources. The fragments that survive contain several curious variations from our Gospel narratives; some notable sayings which may well be authentic, and others which hardly read as inventions. 'Never be glad, but when you have looked upon your brother in love' is lofty. 'Give us this day to-morrow's bread' does not read like an invention, though, as a matter of fact, men may ask to-day for what they hope to consume to-morrow. If this lost document should be original work of Matthew's, it remains at least doubtful whether it was used by the author of our first Gospel. We can see how the latter deals with the Mark Gospel. He appropriates almost the whole of it. He rearranges its statements, and frequently turns isolated sayings into continuous discourses. He sometimes attenuates and sometimes expands. The abbreviations are sometimes made for the sake of brevity, and sometimes they sacrifice vivid details. Thus, from the statement of Mark, 'the wind ceased, and there was a great calm,' he omits 'the wind ceased,' because this is implied in the great calm. The expansions are probably mainly drawn from other sources. In some cases there is a pious object. When, for instance, Mark in his straightforward fashion states anything at all derogatory to the first disciples, or anything that seems to attribute human limitations or ordinary human feelings to the Master, the pious Deutero-Matthew will strike out or modify the statement. He will not admit that Our Lord 'marvelled' (*Mark* vi. 6) or 'sighed' (*Mark* viii. 12), or that 'He could do there no mighty work' (*Mark* vi. 5). In this case he naïvely puts it 'He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief' (*Matt.* xiii. 58). In the same way

'Why callest thou me good? There is none good save one, even God' (*Mark* x. 18) becomes in *Matthew* 'Why askest thou me concerning that which is good?' (*Matt.* xix. 17). Such examples could easily be multiplied. They are an important evidence of the priority of the Mark Gospel, since no explanation of the changes is discoverable, if Matthew wrote first, and Mark modified his text.

It may further be noticed that few, if any, of the expansions of Mark suggest the recollected details of an eye-witness. If an Apostle had freely used *Mark* and other sources, he would surely have added many personal recollections. The more conservative critics rightly insist upon the number of such details in the fourth Gospel, but they rather minimize the importance of their absence in the first. The *Matthew* additions to *Mark* are mostly additional *sayings*. The fact that this is not the case with the Luke additions to *Mark*, confirms the view that 'Matthew' had exclusive access to an important group of *logia*, which may well have been the Hebrew *logia* referred to by Papias. Many critics have tried to identify the latter with Q, but it is more probable that many sayings were recorded both in Q and in the Hebrew *logia*. If we regard these two and *Mark* as three distinct sources for 'Matthew,' it is natural that some sayings should be found in all three Synoptics, some in each combination of two and some in one only.

The first two chapters of *Matthew* are a very important addition. They contain a genealogy of 'Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus.' The greater part of the genealogy (i. 2-15) is arranged in the form: 'Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judah.' To many critics it seems probable that the table originally ended with 'and Joseph begat Jesus,' and that this was altered, because it was inconsistent with the doctrine of the Virgin Birth. Even if we decline to accept this hypothesis, it remains remarkable that the genealogy of Jesus should be identi-

fied by anyone who believed in the Virgin Birth, with the genealogy of Joseph, who, on this supposition, was no ancestor of His. More or less plausible attempts have been made to explain this difficulty; but any impartial critic, not biassed by a belief that everything in the New Testament must have been written by believers in the Virgin Birth, will conclude that the *Matthew* genealogy was originally drawn up by someone who regarded Joseph as the father of Jesus. Our Deutero-Matthew, using this genealogy as one of his sources, may well have amended it, so as to reconcile it with the story which he proceeds to tell (i. 18). This of course leaves unaffected the question of the truth of the belief in the Virgin Birth. We need not dwell on the differences in the stories of the Infancy of Jesus, as told in the first and third Gospels. We are in the presence of two writers, each doing his best with the authorities available to him. If, as Christians believe, they were both inspired by God, it was with an inspiration which did not secure that every story read by the one should also have been read by the other. I have already referred to an ingenious suggestion that Joseph himself was the ultimate authority for the Matthew stories and Mary for the Luke stories. Anyone who cares to read the two accounts of the Nativity and Infancy with this hypothesis in his mind will see how plausible it is. It would be plainly possible that Mary and Joseph should have kept the facts secret, only confiding them to friends, with authority to publish them posthumously. Thus Mark and Paul might never have heard of the stories which Luke and Matthew record.

Turning next to the Christology of *Matthew*, we notice first the extraordinary prominence given to the title 'Son of Man.' Unfortunately, in Aramaic, the same words might mean *a* Son of Man or *the* Son of Man. If Our Lord spoke in Aramaic, as is likely, His hearers would have to decide for themselves in which sense the words were used. They occur eighty times in the Gospels, but

are never applied to Our Lord, except by Himself. We may fairly conclude that He insisted very strongly on His Humanity, at a time when His hearers had not begun to suspect that He was more than man. This perhaps indicates that He had an inward consciousness of Divinity, and wished to insist that His Sonship of God did not prevent His being *a* or *the* Son of Man. The latter would imply a further claim to a unique and perhaps representative position among the sons of men. When we consider how Matthew altered anything in *Mark* that seemed to suggest human limitation in his Master, we shall be the more struck by the fact that, far from altering any of the fourteen uses of the phrase 'Son of Man,' he added nineteen others, presumably derived from the *logia* or other sources.

Finally, we have to notice the Hebraic character of this Gospel. Quotations from the Old Testament are far more numerous than in *Mark* or *Luke*. On the other hand, Jewish customs and expressions are not explained as they are in the others. The author is evidently a Jewish Christian, writing for Jewish Christians, to prove that Jesus was the King of the Jews foretold by Jewish prophets, but rejected by the leaders of the Chosen people. There is no ground for regarding our author as a member of that Judaizing body against which Paul contended. He belonged to a generation when the Judaizing party had disappeared, or had sunk into a small heretical sect. Like most of the writers of the New Testament, 'Matthew' regarded revelation as progressive. He has no hesitation in representing Jesus as a Sabbath-breaker, and even contrasts what was said in the Old Testament with the Higher Law which He was instituting.

The date of the compilation is almost certainly between A.D. 68 and 75; probably either 69 or 72. Chapters xvi. 28, and xxiv. 29 and 34 seem to connect the Second Advent with the Fall of Jerusalem (A.D. 70), and the consequent misery. If this Gospel had been written in A.D. 70 or 71, it seems likely that there would have been

some further reference to the great catastrophe. If its date was as late as A.D. 75, the author would surely have abandoned the idea that the Second Advent would follow so closely upon the destruction of Jerusalem that the two events could be regarded almost as one. It is possible that *Matthew* and *Luke* appeared almost simultaneously. This might account for the fact that neither Evangelist was acquainted with the work of the other; but on the whole it seems probable that our first Gospel appeared after, rather than before, the great catastrophe. This point will be again referred to at the close of this chapter.

Matthew seems to have been the favourite Gospel of the Early Church, if we may judge by the evidences of its use that have come down to us. The arrangement of the materials is in many respects curious. After four introductory chapters, the author gives us that consecutive series of Sayings known as 'the Sermon on the Mount'; Sayings which other Evangelists scatter about in different parts of their narratives. It looks as though his object was to set forth Jesus, successively as Teacher and Healer, rather than to give a narrative in its historical order. Then we have the delegation of both Teaching and Healing to the Twelve. Then a message to the Baptist sums up the various sorts of Teaching and Healing. This is next expanded. Then follows a direct controversy with the Pharisees, in which Jesus definitely claims to be the representative of God. Next comes a return to Teaching, a series of parables, followed by an attack upon His opponents, and then yet another series of parables. Lastly, we have the Arrest, the Trial, the Crucifixion, and the Resurrection. All this seems to indicate that the author of this Gospel deliberately selected and brought together scattered words and acts, which he found in his sources—Mark, Q, the *logia* of Matthew, etc. But when we look more closely, we find that he has introduced a number of original comments, mainly in order to prove that the Life and Teaching of Jesus fulfilled

Jewish prophecy. For this purpose he introduces a large number of quotations and illustrations from the Old Testament. It is also noteworthy that he almost completely ignores the world outside Judaism. When he speaks of 'the people' he means the Jews. He lays more stress than do the other Synoptics upon the fact that the Jewish nation rejected Jesus, and that He then, after His Resurrection, bade His disciples to 'make disciples of all the people.' The writer also emphasizes the relation of the Gospel to the Law (v. 17-48), insisting that the latter is being fulfilled and not destroyed by the former. All this suggests that the Gospel was written for Jewish Christians, in order to provide a bridge for their transition to the Gentile Church, when the Mosaic Law could no longer be obeyed. If the prophecies were fulfilled in Christ, the Messianic Kingdom had come. It was no longer right or necessary to obey the limited and defective injunctions which were indeed given by God, but were not to be included in the New Law. The older revelation was now enlarged, spiritualized, and fulfilled. The appropriateness of such a Gospel to the period immediately following or immediately preceding the Fall of Jerusalem, when Jewish Christians were naturally hesitating whether to remain separate or to merge themselves in the general body of believers, is very evident. If the book had been written before the Fall of the City, but when the catastrophe was imminent, we should expect to find more of that foreboding sense of the coming tragedy which overshadows the *Epistle to the Hebrews*.

We next notice that certain passages in *Matthew* seem to imply that Christianity is purely Jewish, and that the Mosaic Law is binding upon Christians (v. 17-20; x. 5, 6, 23; xix. 8; xxiv. 20). These are probably Apostolic *logia*. Other passages emphasize the world-wide bearings of the Gospel: 'Many shall come from the East and the West, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven' (viii. 11). 'The Kingdom of God shall be taken away

from you (Jews), and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof' (xxi. 43). 'Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations' (xxviii. 19). This antithesis is best explained by the theory that the Apostle recorded *logia* of a purely Judaic character, while the Evangelist added those of a more universalistic description. His object was to appeal to Jewish Christians to merge themselves in the larger organization. So long as the Temple stood, they might have been right to go on obeying the Law; but now that the Temple had fallen, or was about to fall, a purely Jewish Christianity was out of date. They must become part of the Temple not made with hands.

NOTE ON CHAPTER XVII

The attribution of *Hebrews* to Paul was questioned in the third Century by Origen, who saw that the style was quite un-Pauline. Origen thought that the matter might have been supplied by the Apostle, but this is most improbable. The idea that Luke wrote or co-operated in the writing of *Hebrews* was based partly on his relation to the Apostle, and partly on some linguistic affinities of *Hebrews* with *Luke* and *Acts*. Luke was, however, probably a Gentile, while the author of *Hebrews* was almost certainly a Hellenistic Jew. The early tradition that Barnabas was the author of *Hebrews* has been defended by Ritschl, Renan, Salmon, etc. It is mentioned by Tertullian in the second century, but the evidence, outside the tradition, is rather flimsy. Even weaker is the claim of Clement of Rome, though this also has some traditional support. The claim of Apollos is upheld by Luther, Bleek, Reuss, de Wette, Alford, Moulton, etc. Rendall and Welch suggest Peter. Ramsay and Hicks suggest Philip the Deacon. Harnack, Peake, and others suggest Prisca. Most recent critics regard the problem as insoluble. We know too much about Paul to believe that he wrote *Hebrews,* but too little about the other claimants to speak with any certainty.

There are almost equal varieties of opinion as to the persons and the locality addressed. Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, and Corinth are among the churches suggested. But the traditional view that Palestine was the destination of the letter

has at least more support than any one of the other alternatives. It is defended by Bleek, Ewald, de Wette, and many others. Some of these do not regard Jerusalem itself as the Church addressed; but at least it seems clear that the persons addressed are Christians who still cling to the Judaic system, and who may fall away from Christianity if Judaism is discredited. The opponents of the Palestinian theory assert that the conditions implied in the Epistle, do not agree with what we know of the Jerusalem Church. Some critics hold that the Epistle was addressed, not to any particular church, but to some group of people with peculiar ideas and practices (Renan, Pfleiderer, Harnack, Zahn, Bacon, Milligan, Peake, Nairne, etc.). Rome would be the most likely place in which to find such a group.

Reuss, Lipsius, Wrede, etc., hold that the final chapter was added in order to turn what was originally a treatise for all Hebrew Christians into a letter addressed to some particular church, perhaps Jerusalem. No weight must be attached to the use of the word 'Hebrews' in the title, as this was probably a later addition.

A date shortly before the Fall of Jerusalem (A.D. 70) is advocated by Grimm, Rendall, Adeney, etc., but Renan, Bleek, Godet, Hilgenfeld, Westcott, etc., support some date between A.D. 64 and A.D. 68; while a few put *Hebrews* still earlier—*e.g.*, Ramsay, A.D. 58 to A.D. 60. Many authorities put it later still, at dates varying from A.D. 80 to A.D. 118. Others regard it as a composite work, of which different parts were written at considerable intervals.

English Commentaries on *Hebrews:* Peake (C.B., 1902); Dods (Ex. G.T., 1910); Wickham (W.C., 1910); Nairne (C.G.T., 1917).

Matthew has been very variously dated by critics. Grotius puts this Gospel before A.D. 50; Baur *circa* A.D. 140. Bleek, Mayor, Adeney, Bartlet, Godet, Keim, and others *circa* A.D. 68. The majority of recent writers put it between A.D. 70 and A.D. 90. They are pretty equally divided as to whether it came before or after A.D. 80. Burkitt, Montefiore, and others put it between A.D. 90 and A.D. 100. Schmiedel puts it after A.D. 130. Allen defends A.D. 50. The fondness of the author for threefold divisions may indicate a period when the doctrine of the Trinity had been formulated; but the stress laid on

things Judaic favours a date not much later than the Fall of Jerusalem (A.D. 70).

Mark is freely used, compressed, expanded, and interpolated, especially in passages implying that Jesus is primarily the Messiah, or pointing to the world-wide Mission. Whether the Jewish and the Universalistic passages disagree is disputed. Schmiedel attributes the former to a Jewish Christian editor, while Ewald and Schwegler attribute the latter to Gentile editorship. There seems, however, no sufficient reason why a man originally steeped in Jewish ideas, and building up a gospel on apostolic *logia,* should not have produced *Matthew,* even if he failed thoroughly to harmonize differences which he found in his sources.

We have no means of guessing at the authorship of *Matthew.* The writer was presumably a Hellenistic Jewish Christian; but his quotations from the Old Testament are from the Hebrew version, and not from the Septuagint.

The Apocryphal *Gospel according to the Hebrews* may have been based chiefly upon *Matthew* by a Judaising heretic (Weiszäcker, Resch, etc.). Harnack, Holtzmann, and others regard it as an independent first century Gospel, possibly the work of the author of *Matthew* (Nicholson). Hilgenfeld, A. Meyer, etc., are inclined to identify it with the lost work of the Apostle Matthew.

English Commentaries on *Matthew:* Carr (C.G.T., 1901); Allen (I.C.C., 1907); Plummer (1910); McNeile (1915); Micklem (W.C., 1917).

CHAPTER XVIII

THE JOHANNINE BOOKS—I

The Gospel. (A.D. 70-96)

We now come to the latest New Testament Books. They were long attributed to John, the Son of Zebedee, but the correctness of this attribution is at least doubtful. In fact, it is hardly possible that he wrote *all* the Johannine Books, *in their present form*. The Gospel and Epistles have such strong resemblances that we start with a strong bias in favour of the belief that they were mainly written by one and the same man. But in language, style, and spirit these differ so greatly from the Apocalypse, that we are tempted to attribute the latter to some other writer. On the other hand, there are certain common features running through the whole of the Johannine literature; so much so that many of the most competent critics believe the five books to be the products of a school which flourished in Ephesus at the close of the first and during the early part of the second century; a school which owed its origin to the Apostle John, or to an elder of the same name. I shall give certain reasons for modifying these conclusions; but the problem is one of great difficulty and complexity.

I date the Epistles about A.D. 90; the Gospel as mainly written between A.D. 70 and A.D. 96; and the Apocalypse at various times between A.D. 80 and A.D. 96. I consider that the Gospel and the Apocalypse were not arranged in their present form until about the year A.D. 98, and that this was then done by editors who added materials of their own. The work of these editors was, however, of a very different character in the case of the two books. In the Gospel they inserted brief

passages in a masterpiece; in the Apocalypse they had to arrange a number of fragments, as well as to supplement them. If this theory is even approximately true, it is difficult to assign a chronological order to the Johannine Books. If we consider only the order of their publication, the Epistles would come first; but both the Apocalypse and the Gospel contain matter written long before the Epistles. On the whole, I think it best to leave the Apocalypse till the last, and to begin by enumerating leading ideas common to the Gospel and the First Epistle:

(1) God is Love. We have to love Him, but this we cannot do unless we love our fellows.

(2) God is Spirit—*i.e.*, of a purely spiritual nature; not '*a* spirit.' Worship is not true worship unless it is spiritual.

(3) Jesus is the Word of God, with all the Divine Attributes. Through His influence men may become god-like. He influences all men, and was made man for our salvation, and so that God might be revealed in Him.

(4) Jesus came into the world to bear witness to the Truth. The way to attain Truth is to will and to do the Will of God.

Apart from these definite dogmas, the author has a mystical way of spiritualizing materialistic beliefs. In his Gospel, the Second Advent is identified with the Coming of the Spirit into the hearts of believers. Christians have Eternal Life here and now. The damnation of the wicked is that they love darkness. We can become one with God by loving and being loved. Miracles are symbols. Knowledge delivers us from Sin and leads us to Holiness. Historical facts are less important than Spiritual facts to an author whose task is to describe the entry of the Eternal into Time. While he is trying to remember incidents and words, he is also listening to an Inner Voice, and transforming recollections of what happened long ago into permanent ideas.

We will next consider the question of the unity of the

Fourth Gospel. The theory that several writers have co-operated in it seems only tenable in the sense that a few insertions and two considerable additions appear to have been made to a work otherwise of singular consistency. The first of these additions is the story of the woman taken in adultery. Here we find some striking peculiarities of style, and we are confronted by the fact that the incident is omitted in most of the ancient versions and manuscripts, and that those which do contain it vary in detail. Nevertheless, the story bears the stamp of veracity, and we can understand the motives which would have led some men to omit it, in days when ascetic ideas were gaining ground. I have no doubt that the incident did occur, but it does not follow that it was part of the original Johannine Gospel. The other important addition is chapter xxi. Here again a case might be made out for the retention of all except a few words, among which verse 24 must, of course, be included: 'This is the disciple which beareth witness of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his witness is true.' Here the *we* is obviously the editor's. Among other editorial additions I should include that amazing passage in which it is implied that Jesus uttered His Thanksgiving 'because of the multitude which standeth round' (xi. 42). It comes in the sublime story of the raising of Lazarus. It is Johannine in the sense that some of the Ephesus school, in asserting Christ's Divinity, went dangerously near denying His Humanity. Here the object seems to be to explain away His human instinct to pray and praise. One almost wonders that the editor did not omit the words 'Jesus wept,' as unworthy of His Divinity; or at least explain the tears as only for the benefit of the spectators. But even theological editors are human.

In the passage 'This is Life Eternal, that they should know Thee, the only true God, and Him Whom Thou didst send, even Jesus Christ' (xvii. 3), the last three words are probably editorial. The editors were more anxious that there should be no mistake about the mean-

ing of Jesus, than that His words should be dramatically appropriate. I believe that editors are also responsible for the words 'and I will raise him up at the last day' (vi. 40, 44, 54); and for 'He that hath seen hath borne witness' (xix. 35); and also for several explanations of the meaning and intentions of Jesus; but in such cases it would be rash to dogmatize.

That the work was edited seems clear, from the words 'This is the disciple which beareth witness of these things, and wrote these things, and we know that his witness is true' (xxi. 14). Here we have a clear declaration that certain people who call themselves 'we,' are asserting the trustworthiness of a disciple whom Jesus loved, and whom they allege to be the author of some at least of the contents of the Fourth Gospel.

Who was this author? In the first place, he was a Jew. Modern critics for the most part admit this, though they point to a few passages which seem to suggest the opposite conclusion. Some of these passages may be editorial, and the editors were no doubt Greeks of Asia Minor. In other passages the old man's memory may have played him false. In others, again, we may regard him as Hellenized by much contact with Hellenism. We must always remember that he was living among and writing for Greeks, and might therefore have naturally used phrases which would otherwise have seemed unnatural in a Jew. Whether he was a Jew of Palestine, and an eye-witness of many of the incidents he records, is a more difficult problem, too complicated to be dealt with here. I will only say that the commentators who have worked at this question make it clear that there is at least a strong balance of evidence in favour of the traditional opinion. This does not, of course, show that the author was the Apostle John. But if the Fourth Gospel was written at Ephesus, about the year A.D. 100, by a Palestinian Jew who had witnessed the Ministry of Jesus—and so far most of the critics agree—then the arguments against the Johannine authorship are at least weakened. That there should have been then

living at Ephesus a Jew of Palestine who had known Jesus after the flesh is, of course, improbable. Such a man would have to be over eighty, perhaps ninety, years of age; but there is a strong tradition that the Apostle John did live to a very great age. The existence of another such old man with similar qualifications is still more improbable.

Curiously enough, however, another John has been suggested as a possible author of the Johannine Books. This is the so-called 'John the Presbyter,' who is referred to by some of the early Fathers. The very existence of this personage is questionable. If he did exist, it is most unlikely that he was a Jew of Palestine who had witnessed the incidents of the Gospel story; as also that he should have possessed the literary genius shown in the composition of the Fourth Gospel. His introduction into this controversy hardly helps us, except that it serves to remind us of the possibility of confusion between the Apostle and some other man of the same name; and this will only help if we reject the view that the author was a Palestinian Jew, and an eye-witness of the events described. In that case, the author must be some unknown person who composed a work more or less based upon tradition.

The difficulty of supposing that a Palestinian fisherman could have written a book so philosophic in thought, and in such scholarly Hellenistic Greek is of the same sort as that of supposing that a Stratford youth whose schooling was brief, should have written *Hamlet*. *Hamlet* is philosophical enough, and in sufficiently good English. The interval between Shakespeare's London and Stratford periods was not as great as that which separated the Palestinian life of John from the traditional Ephesus period. Learned critics are often too apt to underrate what natural genius can achieve with but little help from education and learning. The career of John first as a pillar of the infant Church, and then as ruling elder of the Churches of Asia, would be at least as good a preparation for his later achievement,

as the career of Shakespeare as a 'poor player.' John would be at least as likely to cultivate his natural abilities; and his experiences were probably quite as conducive to hard thinking and deep feeling. Recent research has indicated that the inhabitants of Palestine were largely bi-lingual, and familiar with Hellenistic Greek. It is, therefore, unreasonable to brush aside the weighty testimony of the second and third centuries on such *a priori* grounds as that one who was a Jewish fisherman in his youth could not, in his old age, have written such a Gospel. A more reasonable objection might be urged against the belief that an old man, of eighty years or more, could have written a book so full of fire and vitality; but it is quite possible that the Gospel was begun before the year A.D. 80, when John need not have been more than seventy; and history has furnished many examples of grand old men over whose spirits age appears to have no dominion. Too much has, perhaps, been made of the connection of John's *Logos* doctrine with the teaching of the Platonists. A Jew might be familiar with the latter through the pages of Philo, who certainly borrowed freely from Greek philosophy. But John's *Logos* doctrine is Hebrew rather than Greek. In Philo, as in the Platonists, the *Logos* combines the idea of 'reason' with that of a 'word,' but there is no hint of this in *John*. The identification of God with His Word is essentially Hebraic. When the Word of the Lord comes to a prophet, it is practically the Lord who comes. When the Psalmist says that the Heavens were made by the *Word* of the Lord, he means simply that they were created by the Lord. *John* begins with this identification. From the beginning of the world God has spoken to men by words which expresses Him so exactly that they may be identified with Him. His Word was the Source of Creation, the origin of Life and Light. In the earlier verses of the prologue there is no such reference to Jesus as theologians import. Similarly, in verses 6-13, the witness of the Baptist is merely to God's Righteousness, to His Word as a Light to all men.

Every Jew, every Theist, can accept the first thirteen verses of the prologue. It is only in the fourteenth verse that Jesus is introduced and identified with the Universal Light. 'The Word became Flesh and we beheld His Glory.' Then we have the second witnessing of the Baptist. As he had previously preached Righteousness and Repentance, so he now preaches the Messiah. This completes the famous prologue, which sums up all Natural and Revealed Religion, and of which the rest of the Gospel is merely an expansion. It marks the Gospel as no mere biographical narrative, but rather as a statement of what *is*, interpreted by what has been, and pointing to what shall be. It is a work of art, in which selection, rejection, and re-arrangement are freely resorted to. Its object is to identify the force that underlies the universe with the Heart of Jesus, to show Him in His fulness as God and Man in order that we may have spiritual life. To the Jew He is shown as the promised Messiah. To all men He is shown as very God.

This is to many critics the really fatal objection to belief in the Johannine authorship. If Jesus was so very human as He is represented by the Synoptics, how could He be the sort of God brought before us in the Fourth Gospel? The author, they say, must have belonged to a generation that was forgetting the humanity of Jesus. He was exerting his great imaginative gifts in the interests of an ecclesiastical doctrine. He represents Jesus as absorbed in theological and philosophical problems, dealing specially with His own Nature, and His relation with His Father. The facts related by the earlier and more trustworthy Evangelists are set aside or rearranged. Others are introduced, of so startling a character that, if they were historical, they could hardly have escaped the notice of the earlier Evangelists, and if known to them, could hardly have been left unrecorded. The Synoptics represent the ministry of Jesus as only lasting for one year, while *John* makes it include three Passovers. They represent Jesus as a Galilean, but

John represents Him as saying that a prophet is without honour in his own country, and then going into Galilee where He is welcomed. *John* speaks of the Jews, and the Law of the Jews, and a Feast of the Jews, as if he himself were a Gentile. He represents Jesus as beginning His work by cleansing the Temple, while the Synoptics put this cleansing near the end. *John* places almost the whole of the Ministry of Jesus in Jerusalem, while the others make it take place in Galilee.

These and similar difficulties are certainly serious. And yet if the creed of Christendom is true, and Jesus was both Human and Divine, *John* might specially show forth His Divinity, while the Synoptics specially showed His Humanity. And it is noteworthy that the Johannine Epistle, far from dwelling exclusively upon Christ's Divinity, propounds belief in His Humanity as a test of discipleship. Again, it is possible that Christ's ministry was much divided between Jerusalem and Galilee, and that John knew more of one part of it, while the Synoptists knew more of the other. Allowance must also be made for mistakes. An old man's memory is not always trustworthy, but we have no right to assume that wherever there is a difference the earlier writers were correct. Take, for instance, the apparent contradiction as to the date of the Death of Jesus. From the Synoptic Gospels we gather that it took place on the fifteenth day of the month Nisan. This is on the face of it improbable, for on the afternoon of the fourteenth, the Paschal lambs would be slain that they might be eaten after sunset, from which time all men would keep twenty-four hours with Sabbatical rigour. Is it likely that the Arrest, Trial, and Crucifixion took place within these twenty-four hours? No doubt the responsibility for the law-breaking might be thrown upon the Roman authorities; but even if this were so, the women would not prepare ointments, nor would Joseph buy a linen cloth, nor would the Jewish authorities send out an armed band on the Feast day. In the Fourth Gospel the Death of Jesus is made to take place on the fourteenth of Nisan. This removes the

difficulty, and the date is remarkable, because indirectly confirmed by Paul's representation of Christ as our Passover, and as the First Fruits (*I. Cor.* v. 7, and xv. 20). If He was crucified, as the Fourth Gospel says, on the very day and at the very time when the Paschal lamb was being slain; if He rose again on the very day on which the First Fruits were offered, Paul's expressions have an added significance; and Paul is, of course, an earlier authority than the Synoptics. If it be asked whether the latter were likely all to be mistaken on such a point, the answer must be that Matthew and Luke take over the date given by Mark, and that Mark himself, writing more than twenty years after the Crucifixion, was not unlikely to be led astray by an error in one of his authorities.

On the whole, then, we conclude that we must not reject the Johannine authorship merely because of divergence from the earlier Evangelists. I do not hold that it is possible to *prove* his authorship; but in view of the strong and positive assertions of many second and third century writers, and the fact that the only early contradiction of this view comes from an obscure sect that rejected the doctrine of the *Logos,* and would therefore naturally wish to deny the Apostolic authority of the Fourth Gospel, I think it best to take the Johannine authorship as a working hypothesis for studying the Gospel in more detail.

Its general plan may now be indicated:

CHAPTER I. 1-18. The Universal Word is made Man.

CHAPTER I. 19 TO IV. 54. He reveals Himself to individuals, to the Baptist, to Nathanael, to the disciples at the Marriage of Cana, to Nicodemus, to the woman of Samaria, and to a nobleman.

CHAPTER V. TO VII. He reveals Himself as a Sabbath-breaker, Healer, and Feeder of the multitude. Opposition arises from kinsmen and from Pharisees.

CHAPTER VIII. 1-11. The moving story of the woman taken in adultery has been wrongly inserted here.

CHAPTER VIII. 12 TO X. 42. Opposition grows.

Jesus reveals Himself as the Light of the World, the Good Shepherd, the Son of God. The Jews therefore try to stone Him.

CHAPTER XI. Opposition still grows. Jesus reveals Himself as the Resurrection and the Life. The Raising of Lazarus.

CHAPTER XII. Jews plot to encompass His Death, but Greeks desire to see Him. The end of His public revelation of Himself.

CHAPTERS XIII. TO XVII. The private revelation of Himself to the disciples in deeds, words, and prayers.

CHAPTERS XVIII. TO XXI. The Trial, Death, Resurrection, and Epilogue.

Excepting in the last section, the author avoids repeating what had already been told by the earlier Evangelists. He doubtless knew the Synoptic Gospels, and his use of them seems clear. Thus, in chapter vi., Jesus ascends a mountain twice, but we are not told of any descent. The two ascents are borrowed from *Matthew* xiv. and xv., and our author overlooked the necessity for a descent before the second ascent. *Matthew* iii. 16 is almost verbally taken over in *John* i. 32, and *Mark* ii. 11 in *John* v. 8. But John's chief concern is with what his predecessors had failed to note. As Plato saw in Socrates what was invisible to Xenophon, so John discovered aspects of the teaching of Jesus which the earlier records ignored, perhaps because the recorders did not appreciate their significance. To bring out the true significance of Jesus, the author of the Fourth Gospel may have attributed to Him words not actually uttered. This was almost inevitable if he wrote from memory after a lapse of sixty or seventy years—busy years during which he no doubt brooded over the words but also listened to the Voice of his Master speaking continually within his heart. It was by combining the two groups of teaching that he could best reveal Jesus. The author of this Gospel seems deliberately to omit some characteristic sides of the Teaching of Jesus, and to substitute for them a series of mystical discourses about His Nature and His relation to His Father. He may have thought that the omitted

aspects had been sufficiently brought out in the Synoptics, and in some of the Epistles. Still, it remains strange that the 'Apostle of Love' does not once allude in his first eight chapters to the Love of Jesus, and that he afterwards lays more stress upon Truth than upon Love; so that even at the last, when the Master solemnly defines the fundamental object of His Life, it is in the words 'To this end have I been born, and to this end am I come into the world, that I should bear witness unto the Truth' (xviii. 37).

As Paul hungered after Righteousness, so John hungered after Truth. Paul saw in Christ One Who can transform our moral and spiritual natures. 'Trust in Him with a whole-hearted faith,' he seems to say, 'and you will become a new creature. You will loathe the works of the flesh, and the fruits of the spirit will ripen in you spontaneously.' John seems to take this for granted. He proclaims indeed the supremacy of Love, and so keeps the ethical side of Christianity well to the fore; but his fundamental antithesis is between Light and Darkness, between believing the Truth and believing a lie. The spiritual life of man springs from the knowledge of God, which *is* Life Eternal. Similarly it is knowledge of the Truth that makes men free. Jesus is the Truth; and the great function of the Comforter is to guide us into all Truth. So, too, enlightenment is the prime human need; and Jesus is the Light that lighteth all men.

This insistence gives a certain austerity to the Fourth Gospel. The aged Apostle has lived so long in a rarefied atmosphere, where the emotions are controlled by loyalty to fact; that though his natural tenderness keeps breaking out, it always gives us a certain shock of surprise. His main theme is the necessity of right belief. Whosoever will be spiritually healthy must, before all things, hold the conviction that God is wholly spiritual, and can only really be rightly worshipped in spirit and in truth; and that Christ is the Light to which men only refuse to turn because they love darkness. These thoughts dominate the Fourth Gospel. It is rather apt to

take morality as a matter of course. How can a Christian fail to be righteous when he is fed by Bread from Heaven, guarded, guided, enlightened? Presumably John had, like Paul, lived through moral and spiritual crises. Once he knew not what manner of spirit he was of. He had even apparently aspired after precedence, but this may have been only his mother's ambition for him. At any rate, in his later years he seems to have almost risen above human failings, unless an excessive dogmatism be attributed to him. He had what appears to many of us an exaggerated hatred of false teaching. Of all the anecdotes told about John none is more characteristic than the story that when he found he was in the same baths as Cerinthus he fled in horror, lest the roof should fall down on them. It is this same John of whom we are told that, when he was very old and could only with difficulty be carried to the Church in the arms of his disciples, and was unable to utter many words, he used to say no more than this: 'Little children, love one another.' These tales may be legends, but even so they are significant. A man's character is often revealed by the nature of the stories that grow up round his personality. In these two anecdotes we see the author of the Fourth Gospel—his zeal for Love controlled by his zeal for Truth, in a way which sometimes produced in him a scarcely human aloofness. He does not care to mention that his Master talked in parables; or that Shepherds and Kings came to worship Him in His Babyhood; or that He had any special interest in publicans and sinners. It is not merely that he does not wish to repeat what others have said. Throughout the Fourth Gospel Jesus seems to move among men and women as an austere, hardly human figure. He glorifies man and woman in general as potentially divine. If they are loyal to the Inner Voice, the Father will dwell in them. They shall be filled with the Spirit of God. We look in vain for any touch of humour, and only occasionally do we find a glimpse of pathos. In the Synoptics we discover hints of a variegated world of all sorts and conditions of men.

In *John*, we have only the sheep and the goats, though he would not describe them in such metaphorical terms. They are either believers or unbelievers.

If the Fourth Gospel lacks colour, it certainly does not lack light. The great Alexandrian, Clement, contrasted it with its predecessors as being specially the Spiritual Gospel. The more philosophical of the second century Fathers seized eagerly upon it. The greatest apologists taught that the Word of God had inspired Jewish prophets and Pagan sages, and was incarnate in Jesus. Christianity is presented by them in the true Johannine spirit, as fulfilling all that was best in the heathen religions; as something that had existed from the beginning, but was now made manifest. Thus, Justin Martyr says that Heraclitus and Sophocles were Christians before Christ. Tatian found in this Gospel a deliverance from the contradictions of intellectual systems, and the unrest of the natural mind. Even Tertullian, the narrowest of all the Fathers, declared that the human soul was naturally Christian; and that Christianity was a restoration of human nature to its pristine health and purity. It is in such teaching as this, rather than in the merely verbal quotations, that we see how completely the ideas of the Fourth Gospel permeated the Church in the second century, and were regarded as part of the Apostolic tradition. If this Gospel was not written by an Apostle, it is the more difficult to understand such rapid and widespread acceptance of its principles.

Among the many alternatives offered for our acceptance by critics who deny the Apostolic origin of the Fourth Gospel, the most plausible seems to be the suggestion that the author was an Ephesian Christian who, in about the year A.D. 100, set himself to write a prose poem upon the Divine Founder of Christianity. He invented the beautiful myth of the beloved disciple, and attributed the authorship of his Gospel to this imaginary figure, whose authenticity he confirmed by the equally imaginary testimony of some imaginary witnesses. In

support of this hypothesis much weight is attached to the resemblance between the speeches of Jesus, of John the Baptist and others, and the author's own diction and spirit. On the other hand, no plausible explanation is offered as to how this sublime but fictitious work won such rapid and widespread acceptance as the record of the Apostle John. Within a century of its appearance the Fourth Gospel was so accepted, not only in Ephesus and the neighbourhood, but throughout the Christian world. Not only was the authorship of the book acknowledged, but the whole tradition which forms its framework, of the aged Apostle living on at Ephesus to extreme old age, was established. If we accept this tradition, it becomes easier to accept the Johannine authorship, and also more difficult to believe in the theory of the imaginary prose poet, writing as if he himself were that disciple whom Jesus loved. Fiction has a truth of its own, but this supposed romance, stating as facts the author's brilliant imaginings, would hardly have had a cordial reception among second century Christians. Further difficulties arise, whether we identify or refuse to identify this sublime romancer with the author of the Johannine Epistles. And the fact that his memory and his very name have perished will seem the more extraordinary, the more highly we appreciate his work. It would be more, rather than less, wonderful if it were a pure effort of the imagination. Similarly, the more we recognize the difference between this Gospel and the already accepted Synoptics, the more we shall realize the difficulties that must have beset its acceptance, unless it was believed to be the testimony of so unimpeachable an authority as the Apostle John. It is easy to talk vaguely of a scholar of Ephesus of the Johannine school who may have produced this Gospel; but the more we try to realize the actual situation, the more likely are we to be driven back to the traditional view, in spite of all the difficulties that surround it. Some critics dispute the identification of the Apostle John with the 'disciple whom Jesus loved,' on such grounds as that the Apostle

was a fisherman and a Galilean, while the 'disciple' was apparently a man of some position, living in Jerusalem. But John's father was no mere fisherman. He had 'hired servants,' and his son may quite well have owned a house in Jerusalem, and been a friend of the High Priest.

There is a tradition that the Apostle John was put to death long before any of the Johannine Books can have been written, but there is no sufficient reason for accepting this tradition rather than those which contradict it. The many stories about the aged Apostle at Ephesus may be inventions, but these inventions are evidence of how widespread was that tradition which is inconsistent with the solitary legend of John's early death.

One ingenious theory is that the beloved disciple bore the same name as the Apostle, that he ultimately became Elder of Ephesus and founder of the Johannine school, and that he was confused in tradition with the son of Zebedee. This theory gives little help towards the solution of the problem as to whether we are to assign the Johannine Books to one author, to two, or to several. It avoids some of the difficulties of the traditional view, but it introduces others, and it leaves many unsolved.

The fact of John's residence at Ephesus is attested by five different writers of the second century—Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, Hegesippus, Polycrates, and the author of the Muratorian fragment. None of the Johannine books claim to be the work of an *Apostle*. The Apocalypse claims to be the work of a *Prophet* named 'John,' the Second and Third Epistles to be by the *Elder*, the Gospel to be at least based on the testimony of a *disciple*. It is quite possible that these descriptions should all be applied to one and the same man, writing mainly as a 'prophet' in the Apocalypse, as an 'elder' in the Epistles, and as a 'disciple'—*i.e.*, a personal witness—in the Gospel, and declining in all cases to obtrude his Apostleship.

NOTE ON CHAPTER XVIII

The problem of the Johannine authorship of the Fourth Gospel is largely one of psychology. Is it credible that the Galilean fisherman should have written in his old age so philosophical a work, couched in such good Greek? Does the book give an impression of reminiscences, coloured by years of meditation on the significance of the Life and Sayings of Jesus; or does it appear rather to be a work of imagination, based on traditions, and essentially putting the theology and Christology of the author into a biographical form? Would the author of so spiritual a work have claimed to be an eye-witness, if he was consciously romancing, with however high a motive? Closely intermingled with psychological problems like these, are various questions of fact: Was the son of Zebedee martyred long before the Johannine books were written? This is the view taken by Bousset, Pfleiderer, Menzies, Wellhausen, Bacon, Jülicher, Loisy, Schmiedel, Burkitt, and others. Harnack, Drummond, Stanton, Zahn, Abbott, J. A. Robinson, and others reject this tradition, which is, of course, contradictory to that of John's old age at Ephesus. Is the son of Zebedee to be identified with 'the disciple whom Jesus loved'? Was there a second John, an elder holding a high position in the Ephesian Church? If so, did he write any, and if any, which, of the Johannine books?

Then there are more purely critical questions: Is the Fourth Gospel so inconsistent with the other three, that it can hardly be the work of one of the original disciples? How came this Gospel, or at least the ideas which it expounds, to be received as apostolic within a few years of its appearance, and in spite of its startling originality, unless indeed it were well attested? These are but specimens of the problems round which controversy has raged. The arguments in favour of the Johannine authorship are well put by Sanday in *The Authorship and Historical Character of the Fourth Gospel* (1872); and in *The Criticism of the Fourth Gospel* (1905); also by Drummond in the *Enquiry into the Character and Authorship of the Fourth Gospel* (1905). On the other side, see the articles by Abbott and by Schmiedel in the Enc. Bib., pp. 1761f and 2503f.

The subject is further complicated by the fact that the book has probably been edited, though we do not know how much the editors did. On the whole the most recent judgments of English criticism have been in favour of the traditional view. In Germany the tendency is to reject the Johannine authorship, but there are notable exceptions in each country. A third set of critics, almost as weighty, hold a middle position, and regard the Gospel as built up upon documents or oral teachings of the son of Zebedee (Wendt, Wellhausen, Renan, Holtzmann, Harnack, Sabatier, Bacon, etc.).

It is now generally held that the date of the completion of the Fourth Gospel is between A.D. 80 and A.D. 110; probably between A.D. 90 and A.D. 100; though parts of it may have been written earlier.

Of the many excellent Commentaries in English, Plummer (C.G.T., 1900); Westcott (1908); and Godet may be specially mentioned. See also Bacon: *The Fourth Gospel in Research and Debate* (1918); and Rendel Harris: *Origin of the Prologue to St. John's Gospel* (1917).

CHAPTER XIX

THE JOHANNINE BOOKS—II

The Epistles. (*Circa* A.D. 90)

The first Johannine Epistle is evidently addressed to Christians who have been Christians for a considerable period. There is here no reference to the disputes between Jews and Gentiles. There is nothing of a missionary character, no hint that the doctrines and organization are new. Its purpose is evidently to sustain and develop rather than to convert. Even its 'new' commandment is of the nature of a reminder. The separation of the Church from the Pagan world has become marked and rigid. The battle that has now to be fought is mainly a battle within the Church. There seems little likelihood that more outsiders will be brought in. They have had time to hear the Gospel fully preached, and to see the Church in actual working order, and as they have not claimed a place within it, the writer of this Epistle practically ignores them. As for those who are members of the Church that is addressed—what they chiefly need is a restatement of the Johannine doctrines as a reminder of what Christianity means. Some new heresies have to be exposed, but these must be fought with the old weapons, as no new ones will be so efficacious. For the real danger of the persons addressed is of forgetfulness, of sinking into a merely traditional Christianity, of making terms with the world. The Epistle is sent as a reminder of what their faith implies. Its aim is mainly pastoral. Polemics are subordinate; though to a modern reader they are apt to seem more important than the comparatively commonplace exhortations which the author regarded as his most vital points. They are introduced, not in the interests of

philosophic truth, but simply to protect the sheep from devouring wolves.

All this points to a comparatively late date. The First Epistle cannot be much earlier than A.D. 90; and if it was written as it professes to be, by an eye-witness, by one who saw and touched the Incarnate Word, it cannot be much later. That an author, so well known that he does not consider it necessary to name himself, should have put forward this claim to have been an eye-witness of events preceding A.D. 30, seems to preclude the theory that the Epistle belongs to the following century. A second century writer who tried to pass off his works as written by an Apostle would surely have named the Apostle. On the other hand, if he wrote in his own name, his readers would know that he was not old enough to have been an eye-witness. The tradition that the Apostle John lived to a very great age, and wrote both Gospel and Epistles towards the end of his life, does at least fulfil the required conditions.

Four objections are, however, made to this weighty tradition. It is pointed out: (1) That the Epistles refer to heresies which we do not know to have existed in the lifetime of the Apostle; (2) that though the author speaks as one claiming authority, he makes no allusion to his Apostleship; (3) that the style of the Epistle differs in some respects from that of the Gospel; (4) that some of the doctrines of the Epistle seem to conflict with those of the Gospel.

Let us look at each of these objections:

(1) There is no reason to doubt that the germs of the Gnostic ideas referred to in the Epistles were at work in the Church as early as A.D. 90, and even earlier. *Colossians,* probably written before A.D. 60, deals with elementary forms of the same heresies. We should expect that in the intervening years the infusion of oriental ideas would continue, and the heresies develop into the forms which they certainly took before A.D. 140. If we make the date of the Epistles as late as A.D. 90, the Apostle must have been a man of eighty at the

time. This is somewhat improbable, but we cannot regard it as altogether impossible that John lived and continued to bear heavy responsibilities till that very great age.

(2) Still less conclusive is the absence of any statement that the author of the Epistles was an Apostle. Humility may account for his simple description of himself as an eye-witness and an elder. He wrote, moreover, at a time when the Apostolate had ceased to be an effective part of the ecclesiastical organization.

(3) The difference of style is no doubt real. Matthew Arnold, speaking of the First Epistle, points out that its style is not flowing and articulated like that of the Fourth Gospel. The sentences come like minute guns, as they might be uttered by a natural Hebrew. The author moves among Johannine ideas, 'not with the practised facility of the Evangelist, although the depth and serene beauty of his spirit give to all he says, an infinite charm.' But the characteristics so admirably pointed out by Arnold are just what might be expected if the author of the Fourth Gospel was hastily writing an Epistle, and producing not a masterpiece for all ages, but rather a contribution to local and contemporary problems. He is applying the ideas in which he lived to the crisis of a spreading heresy. In dealing with his personal convictions, he writes as a master, but in dealing with novel doctrines he shows signs of an old man's hesitancy. Age has not chilled his fervour or weakened his grasp of theological principles, but he has not the nimble fluency of a young controversialist, especially when treating new and unfamiliar forms of heresy. He sometimes repeats himself, and sometimes he gives us those spasmodic sentences 'like minute guns,' because he is more familiar with his own case than with that of his opponents. The particular heresy attacked in the First Epistle was Docetic in theory and Antinomian in practice. Doceticism implied that the Death of Christ was only apparent. A peasant was crucified, but the Divine Emanation which had entered into this peasant at His

Baptism could not suffer. It quitted the Body before the Body died. Then came the horrible deduction of Antinomianism that the 'initiated' stand outside ordinary morality. Sin is not imputed to them. They are not bound by the moral laws which are intended for the average sensual man. Against this strange agglomeration the author of the Epistle proclaims his message of the real Humanity and the real Divinity of Jesus, of the Death on the Cross as a real suffering undergone to save men from sin, not to enable them to sin with impunity. He proclaims the consequent obligation of Christians to walk as children of light, as imitators of Christ, as brothers one of another. The beginning and end of the Epistle and the two short passages which deal with Antichrist, are the only parts definitely connected with the immediate controversy, and it is in them that the style differs most markedly from that of the Fourth Gospel. In the rest of the Epistle we have a positive statement of Faith rather than a definite attack upon false teachers, and in these more positive portions there comes one passage after another, hardly distinguishable in style or in spirit from the Fourth Gospel. The chief distinction is that the Epistle presupposes a knowledge, not necessarily of the Gospel, but of its chief contents. The Gospel was written for the Church of all ages; the Epistle for a group of Christians familiar with Johannine doctrines. Naturally, therefore, we often find in the Epistle a mere summary of things which are fully worked out in the Gospel.

(4) Let us turn next to the alleged differences of doctrine. It is pointed out that the Gospel nowhere attacks false teachers within the Christian fold. This is surely what was to be expected in a biography of Jesus, even though it be a highly spiritualized and allegorical biography. Such a work, even if written in days when heresies had invaded the Churches, would not deal with these heresies except indirectly. On the other hand, the First Epistle was expressly written to warn certain particular Churches against false teachers within

the fold. It would have been unnatural to include in a Gospel narrative any reference to men who distinguish between Jesus and Christ (ii. 22), or who deny that He came in the Flesh (iv. 3). A more serious difficulty is to be found in the different attitudes of the two books towards the question of the Second Advent. In the Gospel this is identified with the Coming of Christ into the hearts of His disciples, after His earthly career was finished. In the Epistle, on the contrary, a definite Advent, when men will rise from the dead to a Day of Judgment, is implied. It seems clear, however, that the Evangelist took for granted, though for some reason he did not choose to dwell upon, a Day of Judgment. He preferred to insist that 'This is the judgment, that the Light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness'; and that His Second Coming would be spiritual rather than apocalyptic. And we find in the Epistle some of that same tendency to spiritualize material conceptions, and to generalize symbols into universal truths. In 'Antichrist' he takes over the familiar figure of that sinister power whose victories were to precede a great defeat by the Messiah; but he proceeds to say 'Even now have there arisen many Antichrists,' implying that everyone utterly opposed to the Spirit of Christ is Antichrist; so that the Apocalyptic Antichrist is but the sum total of the powers of evil, conceived as a diabolic personage. The Antichrists, to whom the Epistle refers as already come, were no doubt quite ordinary in appearance, and did not outwardly resemble the mysterious figure which the prophetic imagination had seen in visions.

Other points of resemblance and of difference will be best brought out in a summary of the Epistle:

Chapter I. The author claims to have seen with his eyes, and touched with his hands, Him Whom he calls the Word of Life, and Whom the Gospel calls simply the Word, but yet declares to be the Source of Life. Such a claim could of course be made by the Apostle John, but hardly by anyone else in Asia, if the Epistle

were not written till about A.D. 90. The attack on the Antinomians begins with the message that 'God is Light, and in Him is no darkness at all.' We can have no fellowship with Him if we walk in the darkness of sin, but if we walk in the Light we have fellowship with God and man, and we are cleansed by the Blood of Jesus. If, like the Antinomians, we say that we have no sin and are not subject to moral laws, we lie, and we make God a liar.

CHAPTER II. We can only know Him by obeying His laws, and not by any *Gnosis* of our own. Those who say that they know Him, and yet break His commandments, are liars; but those who imitate the obedience of Christ have the full Love of God. The commandment is at once old and new—old as the Word of God speaking in the heart of man, and new from the light thrown upon it by the Incarnate Life. The enlightenment claimed by the false teachers is inconsistent with hatred such as they manifest. The commandment is for all ages and all conditions. We all have to choose between loving the 'world' and loving God. The Epistle resembles the Gospel in often treating the 'world,' not as including all humanity, but as only that portion of the human race which is alien to God. Both books, however, use the expression also in its larger sense, as in the phrase 'God so loved the world.' To love the world is therefore sometimes regarded as divine and sometimes as evil. The writer is fond of antithesis. We have to choose between Church and World; Light and Darkness; Love and Hate; Christ and Antichrist; Faith and Unfaith. Such antitheses are also frequent in the Fourth Gospel.

Next come references to Antichrist, a familiar figure in Christian Apocalypses borrowed, though with a changed name, from pre-Christian works. Here undoubtedly we are plunged into a group of ideas to which the Fourth Gospel makes no allusions. In this respect the Epistle occupies an intermediate position between the Gospel and the Apocalypse. The author uses Apocalyptic

language, but it is difficult to suppose that he believed in the literal accuracy of the Apocalyptic visions. He declares that there are many Antichrists, and in the Second Epistle he formally identifies these with those deceivers who deny the humanity of Jesus. He appears to regard Antichrist as the symbol of the whole tribe of deceitful teachers.

We are next told that these deceivers have gone out of the Church, thereby repudiating the Brotherhood. Antichrist is defined as 'he that denieth the Father and the Son'; perhaps because this is implied in the repudiation of the Brotherhood. Believers know the truth, and have only to act up to it in order to be ready for Christ's Coming, or, more literally, for Christ's Presence. Again we are in doubt as to the exact meaning of the author. Probably his thoughts were coloured by the reading, and perhaps the seeing of Apocalyptic visions. He sometimes speaks the eschatological language of his time; but his main interest lies in asserting the real spiritual presence of Christ, against those Antichrists who were breaking the unity of the Brotherhood and explaining away the Ethical Laws of God.

Chapter III. The same lessons are now more definitely based upon the fact that we are God's children. This at least we know, whereas we do not know what we shall be, excepting only that we shall be like Him, and shall see Him as He is. The theological doctrine leads on, as usual, to an ethical principle. Those who have this hope in them will purify themselves, and will become Christ-like. 'My little children, let no man lead you astray; he that doeth righteousness is righteous.' The writer returns again and again to the point that there is nothing artificial or unreal in the technical terms of his theology. Righteousness is doing well; sin is doing ill. This sounds commonplace, but it is an answer to those men who talked as if Righteousness and Sin could be in some way divorced from moral Good and moral Evil. 'In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil.' Cain slew Abel 'because his

own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.' 'We know that we have passed out of death unto life, because we love the brethren.' If in any doubt, we must interrogate conscience and resort to prayer; 'and whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments.'

There is little of logical order about this Epistle. In whatever direction the author starts, he quickly returns again to his leading ideas. God is Light and Life and Love. There is no attempt to show the relation of these facts to one another. The frequently reiterated moral is that we are to walk as children of Light, partaking in Eternal Life, and reflecting the Divine Love. The gulf between God and man is bridged by the Incarnation, which culminated in the supreme manifestation of self-sacrifice on the Cross. Again we notice the absence of logical arrangement. Truths are presented to our hearts and consciences, rather than to our intellects. The appeal is made to Faith, a faculty which here combines Paul's idea of Trust, James's idea of Belief, and that spiritual intuition which is called Faith in the *Epistle to the Hebrews*. Similarly, the ideas of Truth and Love are almost merged in one another, because in the false teachers a departure from truth has led to a denial of the law of Love. All this accords with the Fourth Gospel, but the various ideas are here presented in a more disconnected way. In this respect, John's First Epistle may be contrasted with the Epistles of Paul, who is often discursive, but always has an underlying plan. We can see that *Thessalonians II.*, *Corinthians II.*, and *Philippians* are composite books, because they lack all unity of design; but this lack of unity in the case of the First Epistle of John does not lead us to regard it as composite, because a lack of continuity seems to be inherent in the author's style and mode of thought. In the Fourth Gospel a deliberate arrangement of the materials is evident to a careful reader; but the Fourth Gospel was probably the work of years, and was intended, as we have already seen, as a legacy to future ages, whereas

the Epistle was written in hurried horror of a present and spreading heresy, and in equally hurried anxiety to save believers from the assaults of Antichrist.

Chapter IV. We are now confronted with the problem how are false prophets to be distinguished from the true. The author suggests, as a test, that 'every spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God.' To us, to whom the Divinity of Christ is more often insisted upon, there is something rather startling in John's assertion of the supreme and almost exclusive importance of believing in Christ's Humanity. But in reality John is propounding *a* test, not *the* test. In a previous chapter he had spoken as if *the* test was the belief that Jesus is the Christ, and elsewhere as if *the* test was obedience to God's commandments, or the living in a fraternal relation with men. John holds, perhaps, that all these tests are somehow or other involved in one another; but he does not attempt to show that this is so. Having propounded this definition, he returns to the Law of Love: 'Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and everyone that loveth is begotten of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God. For God is Love.' In this sublime utterance we are again reminded that the false teachers professed a knowledge which John felt to be false, because, however ingenious or logical, it led up to the supposed exemption of the initiated from moral obligations. Every part of the Epistle has to be interpreted in the light of this situation; and if I refer to it rather frequently, I more often leave it out as something to be taken for granted. The fifteenth verse gives us yet another test of true religion: 'Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him, and he in God.' But within a few verses we come back to John's earlier axiom: 'He that abideth in love abideth in God, and God abideth in him.'

Chapter V. Here many of the old truths are repeated, nearly, if not quite, in the old words. But there is also a passage round which much controversy has raged (v. 6, 8). It contains three statements: (1) That Jesus

came by Water and Blood; (2) that the Spirit bears witness; (3) that there are three witnesses—the Spirit, the Water, and the Blood. In our Bible there is a fourth statement (v. 7), namely, that there are three witnesses in Heaven—the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and that these three are one. Assuming, as we may safely assume, that this additional statement is an interpolation, the other three present no serious difficulty. The Water and Blood refer to the Baptism and the Death of Jesus—the beginning and the end of His Earthly Ministry—and they are also the symbols of Purification and Self-sacrifice—the two essentials of Christian life. But if the symbols are to be more than mere symbols, the Spirit also is needed. The two great Sacraments illustrate this. They symbolize purification and self-sacrifice; but it is the spirit which gives them vital force, converting them from mere forms into means of grace. The witness of the Spirit is against the teaching that purification is an 'initiation' which renders self-sacrifice unnecessary. The false teachers treated Baptism as a magical institution, and they had no real belief in the self-sacrifice of the Son of God. With the thirteenth verse begins a fresh repetition of truths already reiterated, but with the added distinction between sins 'unto death' and 'not unto death.' John will not bid us pray that sins 'unto death' may be forgiven. The particular errors that he has been attacking seem to him beyond the reach of prayer, though it does not follow that they cannot be repented of. The Apostle of Love sternly and sadly declines to ask his disciples to pray that Antinomians may be forgiven. Perhaps he is afraid lest his beloved ones should come to think lightly of what seemed to him so horrible. The distinction between mortal and venial sins has perhaps its dangers, but it is hardly as harmful as the view that one sin is as bad as another.

The Epistle ends with the words: 'My little children, guard yourselves from idols.' We can hardly suppose that at the close of the first century Christians were

likely to bow down before actual idols. John is thinking, no doubt, of more subtle forms of idolatry; but we are not told what kind of turning after false gods he has in his mind.

If we attribute this Epistle to the Apostle John, and accept the traditions concerning his later years, we shall probably consider that it was addressed from Ephesus to the other churches of Asia. The absence of all personal salutations favours the view that it was addressed to a whole group of churches; but the theory that this Epistle was a circular addressed to all Christendom, seems to me to be negatived by the hastiness and disjointedness of the style, and the disconnected matter of the writing. Moreover, the author's attacks are evidently directed against special kinds of heresies, which might well be affecting the neighbouring churches of Asia, but hardly the whole of Christendom. And again, it is improbable that Christians scattered throughout the world would be addressed as 'My little children.' Such words would seem more natural if used by the Apostle to a group of churches well known to him, and to whom he was well known. The heretics attacked may be the Nicolaitans. In *Rev.* ii. 6, the Church of Ephesus is commended for hating the Nicolaitans, and this would agree with the strong language used in the Epistle. We have no direct evidence that the Nicolaitans were Antinomians; but we may reasonably hope that no purely intellectual heresy would have roused so much indignation in so gentle and lofty a soul. The author of the Epistle does not name the heretics against whom he fulminates. Antinomianism is clearly the enemy, and we may perhaps assume that this was also the case with the author of *Revelation*, and with the man who fled from the baths to avoid Cerinthus. If so, we obtain an indirect confirmation of the view that they were one and the same person.

The Second and Third Epistles of John

The inclusion of these two letters in the New Testament Canon suggests that at a very early date they were attributed to the Apostle. They contain little that would have specially appealed to the second century. The miraculous and the apocalyptic elements of Christianity are alike ignored, and the piety commended is of a type which could have been accepted by a virtuous Pagan or Hebrew. There is no glorification of asceticism or virginity such as would have been welcomed by the post-Apostolic Church. The Elect Lady is merely a Christian wife and mother. The author of the Epistle loves her and her family; he rejoices that some of her children are walking in the truth. He has no new commandments to give her; nothing newer than that we should love one another and obey the laws of God. He warns her against those who deny the Humanity of Christ, and advises her not to extend hospitality to such men, who were probably itinerant preachers, claiming hospitality from believers. Those who entertain them are sharing in their evil-doing. The writer hopes soon to visit the lady. The children of her elect sister send salutations to her.

On the face of it, this is just such an informal letter as we might wish and expect the aged Apostle to write to a hospitable matron in one of those churches which itinerant heretics were trying to pervert with Doceticism and Antinomianism. Against their doctrines he has nothing new to say; nothing but his old gospel of holding fast the truth, loving one another, and keeping the commandments. These are his answers to new-fangled theories and ethics. The deceivers profess to have the Truth and to be teaching Love. The writer replies by setting up the homeliest of his tests: the keeping of the commandments. The Elect Lady was perhaps inclined to be sentimental or emotional, or given to the pursuit of eloquent preachers. She is reminded therefore that 'This is love, that we walk after His commandments.' Similarly, she

may have been attracted by the claim of the heretics to be purely 'spiritual,' and so she is reminded that Jesus came *in the flesh*. But we know nothing about her or her children, beyond what may be inferred from the Epistle.

Some critics hold that the Elect Lady is not a woman but a church. In that case the elect sister is presumably some other church, and the object of the Epistle is to secure that heretics should be excommunicated. Such an impersonal object seems to some more worthy of the dignity of an Apostle, and of a book included in the New Testament. I do not share this view. At any rate, the plain meaning of the *Third* Epistle cannot thus be explained away, and it is an evidence that a purely personal letter is not necessarily to be excluded from the Sacred Volume. This note is addressed to Gaius. He is walking in the Truth, and is hospitable both to the brethren and to strangers. The latter are apparently poor missionaries. They have brought a report about Gaius which rejoices the Apostle. And the latter has another reason for writing. In the church of which Gaius is a member, there is one Diotrephes 'who loveth to have the pre-eminence.' He has apparently suppressed a letter from the Elder, and is treating those who brought it contumaciously. The Elder thinks it best to warn Gaius of the facts. Perhaps he sees in this disciple some of that same love of pre-eminence which has led Diotrephes astray. At any rate, Gaius is cautioned not to follow the example of the latter: 'Beloved, imitate not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth evil hath not seen God.' One Demetrius is then referred to, in contrast with Diotrephes, and the letter closes with salutations.

Gaius, Diotrephes, Demetrius and the rest are shadow-like figures flitting across the sacred pages; but the introduction of such otherwise unknown personages is a real argument for the authenticity of the Epistle. Why should anyone invent it or its characters? And if it be an invention, how did it secure admission into

the Canon? The preservation of a genuine letter by St. John does not need explanation, even though the letter be homely, and of no special theological significance.

The fact that the writer of this Epistle calls himself 'the Elder' is not without importance. At the time when the Epistle was written there must have been hundreds of Christian elders. We must presume that this one held a unique position, such a position as, according to tradition, was held at Ephesus by the Apostle John. In dignity and in years he was emphatically 'the Elder.'

Such theology as is to be found in the Second and Third of these Epistles is unmistakeably Johannine, but not more so than might be expected, if the work was from the hand of some member of the Johannine school. More important as an argument is, perhaps, the serenity of spirit which underlies even the vehemence and severity of some of the judgments. The simplicity of the diction, contrasted with the mystic depths of some of the thoughts, also reminds us of the Fourth Gospel, and of the *First Epistle of John*. The people to whom he writes are his 'children.' He assumes that his words will be accepted as authoritative. He passes judgment upon missionaries, and upon persons prominent in the churches. He lays down tests and dogmatizes without hesitation. In short, he holds the sort of position which Paul held in the churches which he had founded. Yet the author, be he who he may, had certainly not founded the churches of 'Asia.' It is difficult to believe that he was an ordinary Elder, of so transient a fame that his work was attributed in the next generation to the Apostle John.

NOTE ON CHAPTER XIX

I. John is 'catholic,' inasmuch as it is not addressed to any particular church or individual. At any rate there is no statement of its being so addressed. This Epistle is a series of discourses rather than a letter, and too loosely constructed to justify the formal analyses of Plummer, Findlay, Ewald, and others. The author attacks Doceticism and Antinomianism mainly by assertions as to the Character of God, as Light, Love, and Righteousness; and as to human enlightenment, and the essentially moral character of the Law of Christ. The manner in which points are dropped and then taken up again suggests the old age of the author.

Likenesses and unlikenesses to the Fourth Gospel are obvious. The former do not prove identity of authorship, as the two books may be the work of two men of the same school (Weisse, Davidson, Keim, Schmiedel, Wellhausen, etc.). The unlikenesses may be accounted for by differences in the objects and character of the Epistle and Gospel (B. Weiss, Harnack, Abbot, Wernle, etc.). It is possible that an editor of the Gospel wrote *I. John* and chapter xxi. of *John*. Critics are divided as to whether the Epistle was written before or after the Gospel, and as to whether the Epistle should be regarded as a Preface or a Postscript to the Gospel. If there are two authors, each may be expressing the ideas of a 'school' independently of the other.

The text *I. John* v. 7 is not to be found in any Greek manuscript before the fifteenth century. It was presumably an early gloss of some Latin Father, and thus became incorporated in many Latin versions and in the Vulgate.

The fact that the writer of *II.* and *III. John* refers to himself as 'the Elder,' lends a little support to the view that they were written by the alleged John the Elder (so Erasmus, Renan, Harnack, Peake, etc.). On the other hand, this title might be used by an Apostle writing in the days when the Apostolate was no longer part of the Church's organization. If, however, we had to divide the Johannine Books between Papias' two 'Johns,' we should probably assign the Gospel and the First Epistle to the Apostle, and the Apocalypse and

the other Epistles to the Elder, who may have been one of the editors of the Gospel.

The idea that the Elect Lady of *II. John* was a Church, and not an individual, is still held by many critics, chiefly upon the analogy of *I. Peter* i. 2 and v. 13, and also because of the use of the plurals in *II. John*. The Internal evidence against this view seems to me conclusive.

English Commentaries: Westcott (1892); Plummer (C.G.T., 1896); Brooke (I.C.C., 1912). See also Moffat's article in Enc. Brit.; Forbes' *Johannine Literature* (I.H., 1907); Gloag, *Introduction to the Johannine Writings*, 1891.

CHAPTER XX

THE JOHANNINE BOOKS—III

The Apocalypse. (A.D. 68-96)

If one man wrote both the Apocalypse and the Fourth Gospel, he must have possessed an amazingly complex personality. We know how Coleridge, who saw the visions recorded in *Khubla Khan,* could write when he was distinguishing between the Reason and the Understanding; how Carlyle, whose English was pure and limpid in *John Sterling*, could yet invent the strange diction of *Sartor Resartus;* how Dante hated because he loved. We should therefore hesitate to say dogmatically that one author could not have written works with such differences of style, spirit and language as characterize the two chief books attributed to St. John. We start with a strong bias against such a theory, but we must not exaggerate the difficulties. We can imagine the author of the Fourth Gospel falling into trances; having visions coloured by his knowledge of contemporary Apocalypses; and then proceeding to record such visions, not in the polished Hellenistic Greek which he used in the Gospel, but in a modified form of that vernacular which was familiar to him in his youth, and to which, in the excitement that would follow these visions, he might easily revert. If we once admit this possibility, we can see how the various records of John's visions might have been worked up into an Apocalypse after his death by some loyal disciple or editor. Again, we cannot imagine the author of the Fourth Gospel saying of his own work, that if any man tampers with it, God will curse him (*Rev.* xxii. 18, 19); but we can well imagine the disciple-editor striving to protect his dead master's works by such maledictions.

The problem of the authorship of this book is so closely connected with its relation to the other Jewish and Christian Apocalypses, that it seems necessary briefly to indicate the general character of that strange literature which flourished so luxuriantly between 200 B.C. and A.D. 100. In the period from 800 B.C. to 300 B.C., all that was best in Jewish literature had come from prophets—from men who felt that the Word of the Lord had entered their hearts, enabling them to interpret the Present, and to a less extent, the Past and the Future. The Present was always the main theme of the Old Testament prophets. Their contemporaries were forgetting God, and needed to be reminded of His Character and Will in order that they might return to Him. Till the third century before Christ, these prophets say nothing of a Future Life or of a Day of Judgment. The Apocalypts on the contrary were mainly concerned with the Future—with prophecy in the modern sense of the word. They received revelation, not by the Word of God speaking to their hearts, but by visions either actually seen or invented. The word 'apocalypse' means revelation, but *we* decline to recognize most of these revelations as in any special way inspired; just as, on the other hand, the fact that most of the Bible writers do not claim to be inspired has not prevented Christians from believing in their inspiration. The Apocalypts began their predictions just when prophets were ceasing to appear, and accordingly we find a few Apocalyptic fragments in the Old Testament. They are usually of later date than the other parts of the books in which they are embodied.

The following may be regarded as the chief characteristics of the Jewish Apocalypses: The authors relate visions which they usually attribute to such personages as Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Elijah, Job, and the Twelve Patriarchs. These visions are often explained by angels. The origin of Evil, the history of the Past, the intentions of God, the functions and hierarchy of angels, and the characteristics of the Future Life, are

among the subjects explained; but the general purpose of all these works is to uphold the Jews under persecution, by visionary promises of vengeance. Messiah will come as a conqueror. He will overthrow the persecutors and bring about the supremacy of the Jews, which, according to most of the vision-seers, is to be exercised here on earth. The whole spirit of Hebrew literature was thus transformed. Its chief interest was transferred from the Present to the Future; while the moral and spiritual truths which were the main theme of the old prophets now passed into the background. For these were substituted hopes of victory and vengeance.

This strange literature has, of course, its historic explanation. The ancient prophets were succeeded by scribes and Wisdom writers, both of whom seemed rather dull to ordinary humanity. The persecuted Jews hungered for consolation and for revenge; for something that should feed their imaginations and minister to their national pride. The scribes were dreary worshippers of tradition, distrustful of originality, suspicious of enthusiasms. To them it seemed that God's last word was spoken, and that all they could do was to study the Scripture with literal care. Apocalyptic literature was partly a revolt against the dulness and coldness of the scribes. It made a fresh appeal to Jewish emotions and imaginations, enriching pictures of Messianic expectations with vivid details related by angels or seen in visions, justifying the ways of God, by promises of future rewards and punishments. The ideas of Heaven and Hell acquired a new prominence; but the main object of the Apocalypts was to sustain the race in the time of its most terrible oppression, more by promising the oppressed an escape from their surroundings than by giving them a light by which to walk in time of trouble. The Jewish Apocalypses had little to say of the beauty of Holiness, the purifying effects of suffering, the grandeur of Eternal Laws, or the power of Divine Grace. They had much to say concerning the Advent of a conquering Messiah with

an army of angels, and the triumphs that would follow upon the present calamities. Take, for instance, one episode from the so-called *Apocalypse of Baruch*, written by a first century Jew. Baruch sees a cloud ascending from the sea. Lightnings play upon it. It discharges alternately black water and white. The last black discharge is blacker than its predecessors; but the lightning heals the earth from the effects of this deadly torrent. The explanation is that the chosen people have been passing through alternate adversity and prosperity. The destruction of Jerusalem is the blackest torrent, and it only remains for Messiah to come like lightning to effect the great deliverance. Original sin, the number of the Saved, and the nature of the risen body are among the subjects treated of. Other Apocalypts have visions of the Day of Judgment. The old prophets had felt no need of this. It was clear to them that every day is a day of judgment.

In a simple state of society, the prosperity of the virtuous and the overthrow of the wicked is so evidently the rule, that exceptions can be passed over. The Psalmist in the course of a long life had never seen the children of the righteous begging their bread. But the old writers were generally thinking of nations rather than of individuals. A nation had its ups and downs, and it was easy to regard these as the outcome of the Divine Judgment, especially as Israel and Judah had a rather large share of prosperity until about 720 B.C., and remained fairly flourishing for yet another hundred and forty years. The Babylonian Captivity was regarded as an exceptional punishment for the sins of the nation, and the Return as a signal evidence that the Jews were still the chosen people. Then followed three centuries of varying fortunes (520-220 B.C.), in which minor prophets continued the prophetic traditions, maintaining, in spite of all difficulties, that God was daily judging nations and individuals, rewarding and punishing according to moral deserts. But the facts of life were making this position seem untenable; and the terrible

calamities which desolated Palestine in the following century forced on many the awful thought that if God's judgments were indeed in the present, He must have definitely rejected the Jews. The prophets had ceased to prophesy; and now the Apocalypts came forward with their message that the Judgment Day was in the Future, and that the oppressions and persecutions which they endured, came not from God, but from His enemies. Accordingly they made religion turn more and more upon the expectation of Messiah, and upon the joys and penalties of a future world. Moreover, as the conquerors appeared irresistible it became increasingly necessary to believe in a miraculous deliverance. The old prophets had taught that God is Himself man's reward. The new Apocalypts thought of Him as a giver of future rewards, rather than as a present joy and strength. The old teaching 'Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him' had proved too hard for the ordinary man, unless it could be buttressed by the conviction of a life beyond the grave—a conviction which in its turn needed to be sustained by descriptions of the Future Life, its material Heaven and its material Hell. This craving was met by the Apocalypts, Jewish and Christian. They built up elaborate descriptions of Messiah and His demon opponents. According to some of them, the triumph was at hand. Others more cautious said that it would take place six thousand years after the Creation, and would be followed by a thousand years of Hebrew supremacy. This was of course suggested by the six days work, with the ensuing Sabbath.

This curious literature had an immense vogue. One great Apocalypse (*Daniel*) was included in Scripture. Apocalyptic fragments had been inserted in the books of *Isaiah*, *Ezekiel*, *Joel*, and *Zacharias*. Jesus Himself made use of Apocalyptic imagery, and according to some critics believed that the Apocalyptic predictions would be literally fulfilled. Paul, Jude, and other New Testament writers had done the same. The writer of

the Johannine Apocalypse had evidently saturated himself in the visions or professed visions of his predecessors. It was natural enough that, if he was subject to trances, he should himself have similar visions, and should record them. It does not of course follow that if he also wrote a Gospel and Epistles, he would have introduced his visions into these. For, indeed, if we accept the tradition that the author of the Fourth Gospel was the seer of these Apocalyptic visions, one of the most striking facts about him was that he was a prophet, in the older sense of the word, as well as an Apocalypt. Visions of angels and of the courts of Heaven might appear to him in his trances, and he might record the visions for the benefit of his fellow-Christians; to cheer them in the hour of persecution; to warn them of spiritual dangers; to encourage them not to quail before the power of the Roman Empire, or to hold a moment's truce with the new religion of Emperor-worship, which was enforced in all the Roman dominions, during the last decade of the first century. Nevertheless, like the greatest of the prophets, he was possessed by a sense of the importance of the Spiritual. To him, as to Plato, ideas were the great realities.

The next thing that strikes us about this strange book is its obviously composite character. Some of the visions can be dated with tolerable certainty before A.D. 70; others as not having taken place until after A.D. 94. The different visions sometimes cover the same ground. Several of them carry us on to the end of the world, the great Day of Judgment, the final overthrow of the heathen power, the final victory of Christ. Internal evidence points to these being the visions of one and the same man, recorded by one and the same hand; yet they are not given in chronological order. The first vision in the book must have been, chronologically, one of the latest actually seen. Several learned and ingenious critics have broken up the book into separate fragments, and then suggested that some

unknown author set himself to write an Apocalypse by combining various Jewish and Christian documents, including one from Babylonian sources. This theory makes no allowance for the uniformity, and especially the linguistic uniformity, which underlies all the surface variety. It seems more probable that the composite work was the production of an editor, that his materials were the documents of a single seer, whose visions had been coloured by the reading of both Jewish and Christian Apocalypses, as well as by at least one story from Babylonian sources. They were also much affected by the politics of his time.

The editor would naturally place first, a recent vision which had led the seer to write a circular letter to the Seven Churches of Asia, the region to which such an editor would naturally belong. This vision and the letter had no doubt already been sent round to the churches. It might naturally be described by the words which also form a superscription to the whole book. It was a Revelation of Jesus Christ, sent and signified by His angel unto His servant John, to show what would shortly come to pass. The loyal editor might well add 'Blessed is he that readeth and they that hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things which are written therein.' There was no need to explain who this John was, though the phrase 'who bare witness of the Word of God,' would point naturally to the author of the Johannine Gospel and the First Epistle.

But it may be said: Why should not an author be attributing his own work to the Apostle, just as other Christian Apocalypts poured out their visions in the names of Peter, Thomas, Paul, Stephen, Bartholomew? The analogy of the names makes this theory plausible; but an analogy is not an argument. The other Apocalypses attributed to Apostles are, for the most part, very obviously not the work of Apostles. They were deliberate compositions in which visions were mere literary devices. Whether the same can be said of the Johannine visions is a question requiring some subtlety of criticism, and

more knowledge than we possess of the psychology of trances, visions, and ecstasy in general. My own impression is that we have in this book records of actual visions, and a degree of inspiration that raises them far above both previous and subsequent Christian Apocalypses. Many modern readers are no doubt repelled by some elements in the book. The gold and precious stones, the harpists, the angels, and the gorgeous ritual of the heavenly worship seem unspiritual to some; while others unmoved by Puritanical prejudices are shocked by the fierce denunciations introduced into the book. Possibly if they had lived under the Domitian persecution, and had seen the attempts to enforce Emperor-worship, they might read these denunciations with more sympathy. To our vision-seer, Rome was indeed Antichrist. The worship of emperors and of such emperors was the antithesis of pure religion and undefiled. The blood of the saints was crying for vengeance to Heaven, and the whole work of Christ seemed in danger of being blotted out. Can we wonder that the consolations offered to the oppressed were associated with curses upon the oppressors? A lonely exile, standing up against the whole power of Rome might well thunder out maledictions, and point with confidence to the coming overthrow of the beast-like domination, in language which to the polite ears of quieter times would seem bigoted and even unchristian.

But perhaps the chief prejudice against the Johannine Apocalypse has grown out of the absurd methods by which the book has been interpreted; methods that disguise the real spirituality underlying visions which, though in form necessarily materialistic, were none the less proclaiming eternal principles. Foolish commentators have treated this book as a series of riddles, which, if carefully studied, would reveal the history of the world till the Day of Judgment and afterwards. If it is pointed out to them that the book itself professes to predict only such things as will 'shortly come to pass,' they glibly reply that in God's sight a thousand

years are but as yesterday, and that 'shortly' may signify a few centuries or a few thousand years. On this principle the Apocalypse may be made to mean anything. The Beast may typify the Papacy, or Martin Luther, or Bonaparte. You can work out the date of the Last Day; but it will probably happen as it has so often happened before, that the fateful date will pass, and the Last Day will not have appeared. Every such prophecy disgusts a few sensible people and further discredits the Apocalypse; yet there are still many who will eagerly listen to these interpretations if they are moderately ingenious and proclaimed with sufficient confidence.

In studying this book it will be as well to begin by assuming that the author means what he says; that 'shortly' means 'shortly,' and that when he says 'I was in the spirit on the Lord's Day,' he means literally that he was in a spiritual trance, and heard a voice and saw visions, such as he describes. He sometimes uses obscure phrases, because he does not want to be martyred, as he would have been if he had said that by the Beast in chapter xiii. he meant the Emperor Nero. He prefers to say that the number of the Beast is six hundred and sixty-six, because this will not betray his treasonable sentiments to Roman officials, and will yet be quite intelligible to the brethren. They have only to apply their Kabbala to the Greek title of the Emperor Nero, in order to arrive at the number six hundred and sixty-six. Similarly, if they applied this system to the Latin form, they would obtain the number six hundred and sixteen. Accordingly we find that in Eastern manuscripts the number of the Beast is given as six hundred and sixty-six, but in some of the Western manuscripts it is given as six hundred and sixteen. The important point was that the brethren should know of whom the writer was speaking. More commonly, the Beast represents the Roman Empire generally; but in this particular passage it represents the particular emperor who set Rome on fire, and then, as Tacitus

says, 'falsely charged with the guilt, and punished with most exquisite tortures, the persons called Christians. . . . They were covered with the hides of wild beasts and worried to death by dogs, or nailed upon crosses, or set on fire.' This is the testimony of a writer who regarded Christianity as a pernicious superstition. Christians were not to be expected to feel kindly towards the monster who murdered his own mother and his own wife, in addition to torturing and slaying so many of the Faithful. The Apocalypt paints him with vivid strokes. He tells us that 'the whole earth wondered after the Beast,' because it was Nero's great ambition to make men wonder at him, whether as fiddler, actor-manager, or emperor. 'And they worshipped the Beast, saying Who is like unto the Beast' —almost a paraphrase of the adulation with which Nero was acclaimed. 'And there was given to him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies;' for Nero was a stupendous braggart as well as an atheist. 'And there was given to him authority to continue forty-two months.' Nero reigned for just three and a half years after he began to persecute the Christians. 'And he opened his mouth for blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, even them that dwell in the heaven.' This is a reference to the Church. 'And it was given unto him to make war with the saints and to overcome them; and there was given to him authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation. And all that dwell on the earth shall worship him, everyone whose name hath not been written in the Book of Life.' The worship of Nero extended through all the provinces, but no genuine Christian could take part in it.

While in this particular vision the Beast is definitely Nero, the monster generally represents the great anti-Christian power, the Roman Empire. We are explicitly told that the seven heads of the Beast represent seven kings, of whom five are fallen, one is, and the other is to come. The kings here are the first seven emperors,

of whom Nero was the fifth. The sixth reigned for a few weeks only. Evidently, therefore, this vision took place after the death of Nero (A.D. 68). The Apocalypt was apparently convinced that Galba's reign would be short, and that the mystic number seven would thus be speedily completed. He proceeds to the strange prediction that 'the Beast that was and is not, is himself also an eighth' (xvii. 11). This looks as if the Apocalypt shared the widespread view that Nero would come to life again, and regain the empire. If so, the mistake is a proof—if proof be needed—that the author was not infallible; but this does not affect either the justice or the vividness of his description of Nero. Still less does it affect the truth of the thought that underlies the whole series of visions —that the Church and the Roman Empire were now entering upon a life and death struggle, which was essentially a struggle between brute force and those ideas which Jesus had taught, and which John and Paul had interpreted. Meanwhile we can date this series of visions with tolerable certainty as having taken place in the latter part of the year A.D. 68—*i.e.*, in the short reign of Galba.

The vision recorded at the beginning of chapter xi. comes a little later. It refers apparently to the siege of Jerusalem. The court that is without the Temple is already occupied by the invaders. Roman troops are treading the Holy City under foot, but the Apocalypt still hopes that the Temple itself and the Altar may be preserved. Much of this vision is obscure, because it refers to things of which we have no historical knowledge. Some of them may be merely visionary—unintelligible to the vision-seer as to us—suggested perhaps by other Apocalypses which the author has read, or merely 'such stuff as dreams are made on.' This vision may be dated early in A.D. 70. The vision of chapter xiii. is probably based upon either a Babylonian myth of the Birth of the Sun God, or upon an Egyptian myth of the Birth of Horus. A parallel myth is the classic story of the birth of Apollo from the

pregnant fugitive Leto, who is pursued by a dragon. When we try to interpret this vision in detail, we are met by insuperable difficulties, whether we take the woman to represent the Virgin Mary, or the Christian Church, or the special Church of Jerusalem. Evidently no Christian writer would have invented this vision as an allegorical representation of facts. What probably happened was that John had read a myth, had fallen into a trance, had seen the strange incidents of the myth repeated in his dream, and had connected them vaguely with the things with which his mind was preoccupied—the hostility of that old dragon Satan to Christ and to the Christian Church. Now that Jesus is in Heaven, Satan is persecuting the Christians. The Jerusalem Church has been driven into the wilderness before the assailants of the Holy City, but God has prepared a place for her. One fundamental object of the whole Apocalyptic literature was, as we have seen, to provide consolation for the suffering people of God. The old Sun-god myth lent itself to this, but we must not insist upon precise detailed interpretations.

The editor connects this vision with another, of war in Heaven between Michael and the Dragon. The Dragon forms the connecting link. The vision of the fugitive woman may be dated about A.D. 70, but there is nothing to fix the date of the Michael vision which the editor has inserted in this particular place. The vision in vii. 9-17 probably came late in the reign of Vespasian, perhaps in A.D. 78. The vision of xvi. 2-21 seems to belong to the eighties; and those of xviii. 1 to xix. 10, and xii. 1 to xiv. 5 to the early nineties. Most of the matter of the book probably relates to visions which took place about the year A.D. 95. In the first chapter we have what was perhaps the latest vision of all. This definitely asserts that the seer was 'John,' and that it took place when he was 'in the Isle that is called Patmos, for the Word of God, and the testimony of Jesus'—*i.e.*, when he had been sent there as a punishment for his religion. Tradition attributes John's exile on Patmos

to the last years of Domitian, who was the inaugurator of the first general persecution of Christians, and the first emperor to be legally deified before his death. Now it is evident that Emperor-worship and the persecution of the Christians are very prominent facts in many of the Johannine visions. Thus internal evidence reinforces the positive tradition that John was exiled to Patmos, and wrote some of *Revelation* in the last years of Domitian, who died in A.D. 96.

Let us next look at the opening verses in the light of the assumption that John died in or about the year A.D. 96, and left behind him records which an editor arranged as an Apocalypse.

Verses 1-3 are plainly editorial. The editor calls his whole composite Apocalypse 'the Revelation of Jesus Christ.' He refers to John in the third person. The name was a very common one, but to this loyal editor no further description was necessary, although to avoid any possible ambiguity, he says 'John, who bore witness to the Word of God.' He also adds a blessing to the reader and to the doer of the things revealed.

Verses 4-8 may also be editorial; but they may be part of John's manuscript, a fragment introduced here to lead up to the vision.

The record of the vision first recorded, plainly begins with verse nine. The third person is changed into the first, 'I, John.' John says he was 'in the spirit —*i.e.*, in a trance. He relates what he heard and saw. The Risen Lord is present with him at Patmos, and bids him write to his beloved churches from which he had been exiled. He saw these churches in the form of 'angels,' and so his words are addressed in turns to the angel of each church. The puzzled commentators invented theories that 'angel' was the title of a bishop or elder, or that John writes to the guardian angels of the churches; but the words are evidently addressed not to officials, whether human or angelic, but to the churches themselves, which have been visualized as angels. Further confusion has been intro-

duced by mention of 'the seven letters.' In reality there is one letter only, a circular epistle which is to be carried by a messenger to Ephesus, to be read there, and then taken on to the other churches. They are named in the exact order which a messenger would naturally have taken if he had wished to visit them all. The editor, no doubt, had a copy of the circular letter, which forms a good introduction to the visions which had occurred in former years. It would be known, by reputation at least, to all the Christians of 'Asia,' and would be a fitting preface to the new material. It included the record of the vision in which the command to write it was given. We cannot determine whether it ended with chapter iii., or whether it included iv., v., and vi. If the former, the editor has worked separate visions into a consecutive narrative. At any rate, chapter vii. is so disconnected from what precedes it, that we can hardly doubt that the opening words, 'After this,' are an editorial link. By internal evidence we have here the record of a vision which had taken place nearly twenty years earlier. The editor is indifferent to the chronological order. His task is to weave his master's visions into a connected Apocalypse; but he has apparently found among the manuscripts a copy of a Jewish vision which he supposes to be John's, and which he therefore inserts (vii. 1-8). The spirit of this fragment is intensely Judaic, and it seems hardly possible that a vision of the Christian seer should be so coloured by reminiscences of his pre-Christian days as to take so purely Jewish a form.

Consideration of space prevent our carrying this analysis further. Enough has been said to show what I regard as the method in which the *Revelation* was put together. Some such hypothesis seems necessary to account at once for the resemblances and the differences between this particular Apocalypse and all other works bearing the same title. It resembles the others in its visionary form, in its appeal to the senses through the imagination, in its picture of the Day of Judgment,

and in many other details. The main object of them all is to uphold the persecuted elect by the promise of a great deliverance, of a Messianic kingdom, and of a reign of the saints. But while its visions are even more vivid, and less artificial, the book combines with the Apocalyptic elements, the higher and more spiritual character of ancient prophecy. Christ stands at the door and knocks. He is present on earth. He is ὁ ἐρχόμενος, always coming to His own. His Strength is His Righteousness, even as the real weakness of the Beast is ethical. The primary object of the *Revelation* is not to predict the future, but to interpret the present in the light of Eternal principles. It ministers to the desire for definite concrete pictures, and for supernatural if not magical elements; and yet it is at bottom so intensely spiritual that it was included in the Canon of the New Testament as early as A.D. 170, and has held its place in spite of the protests of the more Puritanical of the third century Christians and the jeers of many third century heretics. Both classes of critics disparaged its sensuous qualities, not realizing the sanctity of the Visible and the mystic claims of the Æsthetic.

The plausible and obvious objections that might be made to the book from the point of view of the early Christians indirectly confirm the attribution of its authorship to St. John. Unless it could claim so high an authority it would hardly have found a place in the Canon and been so widely accepted in the second century. The Patristic attacks on the Johannine authorship began as late as A.D. 255. By that date people were hardly in a better position than our own to judge of the external evidence; and, as a matter of fact, the attacks on the book were based wholly on internal considerations, the weight of which the third century was not particularly competent to judge.

The problem is full of difficulty. If we ignore those critics whose bias towards traditional views is especially strong, it must be admitted that the balance of modern authority favours the view that the book is a composite

work, in which some member of the Johannine school—perhaps John the Presbyter—has welded a number of Jewish and Christian Apocalypses into the book as we have it. Some critics would say that he has included fragments from sources that are neither Jewish nor Christian. They usually add that the linguistic peculiarities of the book are such that the author must have largely rewritten his materials in his own singular dialect. They date the book about A.D. 100, or between A.D. 100 and A.D. 140, but they offer no satisfactory explanation of how such a book came to be so widely accepted as authoritative, and even as Apostolic, within so short a period, and by such leaders of second century Christianity as Justin, Tertullian, and Clement of Alexandria. These men were hardly likely to be deceived by a miscellany of Jewish and Christian Apocalypses.

It has further to be noticed that if we attribute *any* of the Johannine books to St. John, and to the closing years of the first century, the tradition that the Apostle lived at Ephesus and attained to a very great age can hardly be put aside. The difficulty of attributing other books to him is thereby diminished, except from the point of view of those who consider such attributions *a priori* impossible. Little weight can be attached to the facts that the work does not claim to be Apostolic, and that the vision-seer is in one place called a prophet. The book is plainly prophetic in character, and not especially Apostolic. If we decide that St. John cannot have written any of the books usually attributed to him, we not only disregard a singularly strong and practically unbroken second and third century tradition, but we are also compelled to believe that, while the Apostle wrote nothing of importance, his school contained two or more members of quite unique religious genius who were, nevertheless, quite unrecognized as such by their own generation and by subsequent ages.

NOTE ON CHAPTER XX

Theologians in different ages have sought, with no small ingenuity, to discover in the Apocalypse a solution of contemporary problems, and a justification of their own views. Thus we can divide the interpretations of the Millennium into the following groups: (1) *Literal.*—A prediction that the saints will actually reign for a thousand years over the earth. This was the generally accepted view till the third century, and is still cherished by many half-educated people. (2) *Allegorical.*—Alexandrian Fathers started this view in the third century, and, in one form or another, some critics have defended it ever since. (3) *Ecclesiastical.*—From the fourth to the tenth century the prevailing idea was that the Church (the Kingdom of God) was to last a thousand years. Then Antichrist and the Last Day would come. As the fateful year drew near great religious revivals and panics set in. When the year 1000 passed, 1030 was substituted, to make up the thousand years since the founding of the Church. When this also passed, the Apocalypse seems to have been for a time neglected. (4) *Revolutionary.* — Joachim's *Commentary* (A.D. 1195) initiated the tendency to interpret the book as a counterblast to oppression and corruption. Abuses in the Church and State and deliverance from them, were supposed to be predicted, and for the next four centuries the Apocalypse was a textbook for those men who looked forward to the establishment of a Millennium of reformed society. (5) *Protestant.*—The Scarlet Woman was Rome. Antichrist was the Pope. The Millennium was the Fifth Monarchy, the coming reign of Protestant Saints. Thus for more than twelve centuries the fact that the Apocalypse was a first century work was ignored. Each age connected the prophecies with its own circumstances. (6) *The Counter Reformation.*—Romanists fought the Protestants with their own weapon. Antichrist was not the Pope but Luther. The Whore was the Reformation, and so on. To each interpreter the Millennium meant the time when his own views would triumph. (7) *Historical.*—To the Jesuit Commentators we owe the beginning of rational interpretation. They showed that John was speaking mainly

of the events of his own time. The Rome pointed to as 'Babylon' was the Rome of the first centuries, with its Emperor-worship, persecutions of Christians, and other abominations. The predicted triumph was the triumph of Christianity over Heathendom. (8) *Modern.* — Beginning with (6), the stream of interpretation breaks up into a number of divergent rivulets which have now to some extent converged. In 1886, Vischer attempted to prove that the book was a Jewish Apocalypse Christianized by a late writer. Weiss, in 1904, maintained that it was a combination of two Apocalypses, Jewish and Christian, by a third writer. Both these theories are now rejected, but they paved the way to the modern conception of a composite work with an underlying unity. Complete agreement has not been even approximately reached.

The following points seem to me clear: (1) The Book contains records of actual visions, spread over the years A.D. 68-97. This separates it from other Apocalypses which are conscious works of art in an established literary form. (2) Linguistic characteristics indicate that if fragments from other Apocalypses were introduced, they were completely rewritten in the strange style of the author, whose name was probably John—whether Apostle, Elder, or neither. (3) The records of visions and other fragments were arranged by an editor, probably after the death of 'John,' but the editor did little beyond arranging and connecting the fragments and inserting Preface and Postscript.

Most critics deny the Apostolic authorship of the book, but the opposite opinion is held by many 'conservatives,' by some 'moderates,' and by a few who may be considered 'advanced.' Among recent upholders of the Apostolic authorship, Ramsay and Feine may be mentioned. Harnack assigns both Apocalypse and Gospel to 'John the Elder.'

English Commentaries: Milligan, W. (1893); Swete (1912) and above all, Charles (I.C.C., 1920). See also the same author's excellent article in Enc. Brit. and his *Studies in the Apocalypse* (1913). See also Beckwith, *The Apocalypse of John* (1920).

CHAPTER XXI

SOME REJECTED BOOKS

THE EPISTLE OF BARNABAS. (PROBABLY *circa* A.D. 75)
THE DIDACHE. (DATE QUITE UNCERTAIN)
I. CLEMENT. (PROBABLY *circa* A.D. 93)
THE SHEPHERD OF HERMAS. (PROBABLY *circa* A.D. 97)

THE twenty-seven books of which we have now spoken, came to be regarded as Scripture in the course of the second century. But there were several other books of which the same may be said, though these did not attain as secure a position as the Gospels and the chief Epistles of Paul. On the other hand, in many churches some of these ultimately rejected books were held in more reverence and regarded as more authoritative than, say, the *Second Epistle of St. Peter,* or *Hebrews,* or the *Apocalypse.*

Before dealing with the steps by which these twenty-seven books came to be regarded as of unique authority, it will be desirable to speak briefly of the four books which came nearest to inclusion in the New Testament, but were ultimately excluded. The *Epistle of Barnabas* was probably the earliest of these. It may well have been written soon after A.D. 70; and it was attributed to the Apostle Barnabas as early as the second century, though it puts forward no claim to such august authorship. This book appears in two of our very oldest manuscripts of the New Testament, and was probably regarded as Scripture by some churches in the fourth and perhaps in the fifth century.

The *Epistle of Barnabas* is, in the main, an orthodox and evangelical treatise; but it is disfigured by hatred of the Jews, by fanciful allegorization, and by the

attribution of mystical meanings to minerals and letters. These subtleties were common among Alexandrians, and make it almost certain that the author had lived and studied in Alexandria; a view which is confirmed by the fact that while he is very familiar with Jewish rites as ordained in the Old Testament, he is curiously ignorant of what was actually done at Jerusalem, including even the ceremonies performed on the Great Day of Atonement. He propounds, moreover, the startling hypothesis that Jesus chose criminals to be His original Apostles. This is presumably based on the fact that the Master's mission was so emphatically a mission to sinners. These points are practically fatal to the idea that Paul's colleague was the author of this letter. Of him we know little except that he was a Jew and a Levite, and that he was in close touch with the Jerusalem Church. It is hardly possible that this Barnabas was ignorant of the Temple rites or of the character of the Twelve, nor is it likely that he would have been familiar with mystical Alexandrian methods of interpreting Scripture.

This Epistle makes a great distinction between the Jews generally, and the authors of their sacred books. The latter are regarded as inspired, but the former are accursed. They lost their Covenant rights when Moses broke the Tables of Stone. Their sacrifices were mere forms, unspiritual and therefore valueless; denounced by their own inspired prophets, whose insight made them Christians long before the Incarnation. The choice set before the Jews by the prophets is now offered to Christians. They must choose between the letter and the spirit, between a formal worship such as that which the Jews had offered in the Temple made with hands, and a spiritual worship whereby they themselves would become temples of God. This reference to the Temple, and certain Apocalyptic details in chapter iv. suggest a date shortly after the Fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Other passages suggest a date about A.D. 120, when the Emperor Hadrian was inclined

to favour Jews, and perhaps to arrange for a rebuilding of the Temple. A few parallelisms with the Johannine Gospel and Epistles favour the later date. On the other hand, the traditional view as to the character of the Twelve and the significance of Judaism must have become so firmly established by A.D. 120, that an Epistle describing the Apostles as law-breakers, and Judaism as a false religion rather than as a stepping-stone towards Christianity, would have been less likely to win acceptance in any of the churches than the same paradox might have done if it had appeared at an earlier date. There was, of course, a great element of truth in the antithesis between the Old Testament writers and the actual religion of Jews; but the use made of this in *Barnabas* would hardly appeal to Christians familiar with *Romans* and *Hebrews*. These books were probably quite unknown at Alexandria in the seventies. The church there would more easily accept an Epistle attributed to an Apostle, and propounding a solution of a really difficult problem, even though that solution was very different from the view ultimately regarded as orthodox. It is possible that most of *Barnabas* was written about A.D. 70, and certain passages interpolated in A.D. 120. The rejection of the Epistle from the New Testament is probably to be accounted for by the features to which I have referred. The orthodox parts of it were not allowed to outweigh the disparagement of Judaism, and of the characters of the Twelve Apostles before their Call.

The author writes as a Greek to Greeks; but he was probably a converted Jew, showing the bitterness towards his old religion that is often displayed by converts. The great peril according to this writer is the possible Judaizing of Christianity, and of this there was probably more danger in A.D. 75 than in A.D. 120. But it must be remembered that the author's hostility is directed not so much against a particular group of rites as against the spirit of formalism which is found working against pure religion in all ages and all churches. According

to this Epistle, nothing is required by God save moral and spiritual activities. It was difficult for a sacramental and sacerdotal church to reconcile this doctrine with its institutions and the claims put forward for them. The implication that the Jewish Sabbath, Circumcision, Sacrifices, and the rest, were the work of an evil angel was equally unacceptable to those who regarded the Law as a divinely-appointed pedagogue, leading men to Christ.

The Didache

It has been generally assumed that, until the New Testament books were composed, circulated, and accepted, there was no written document embodying the chief articles of Christian belief and conduct. There are, however, some passages in the New Testament itself which seem to point to the existence of at least one such document, known as the *Didache* (teaching) 'of the Lord' or 'of the Apostles.' Before the year 1875 this theory seemed most improbable, but in that year there was discovered at Constantinople a manuscript which calls itself *The Didache of Our Lord, through the Twelve Apostles to the Gentiles*. This document contains passages some of which seem to be of very early origin. It is probably a composite work, embracing at least two different documents, which may have been current from the middle of the first century. In the light of this discovery, we must face the question whether there are any references in the New Testament to an authoritative written document.

In *Acts* ii. 42 we are told that the disciples continued steadfast in the Apostles' *Didache*.

In *Acts* xiii. 12, Sergius is astonished at the *Didache* of the Lord.

In *II. John* 9, we are told that he that abideth in the *Didache* hath both the Father and the Son.

It is possible that these passages refer only to oral teaching, but the opposite view seems at least tenable; and though we cannot positively assert the existence of a

written *Didache* earlier than most of the New Testament books, we cannot ignore the undoubted references, in the second and third centuries, to a *Didache* which is sometimes spoken of as if it were the authoritative teaching of Christ and the Apostles. There were also references to another work, known as *the Two Ways*, much of which is quoted in the *Epistle of Barnabas*. Quotations from and allusions to *the Two Ways* are also found in other primitive works in Greek, Arabic, Syriac, and Latin.

The manuscript discovered in 1875, which we will call *Leo*, after the 'notary and sinner' who wrote it out in the twelfth century, appears to include both *the Two Ways* and the primitive *Didache*, with certain additions from an unknown source. The 'two ways' are the Way of Life and the Way of Death. The Way of Life is to walk in love, and especially to obey the commandments of the Second Table. It is noteworthy that no reference is made to Sabbath observance, or to honouring parents. This suggests that *the Two Ways* dates from a time when the Jewish Sabbath had been discredited and no Sabbatical associations had gathered round the Christian Sunday. The other omission points to a still earlier date, to a time when almost all Christians were children of non-Christians. The difficulty of duly honouring pagan parents, while abhorring Paganism, ought not to have been insuperable; but *the Two Ways* shirks the question by omitting all allusion to the Fifth Commandment. After dealing with the moral obligation of Christians—the choosing between the two ways—*Leo* proceeds to speak of matters ecclesiastical. Here again we have signs of a very early date. Apostles are spoken of as the chief ministers, and as occasionally visiting the churches. If by 'Apostles' we understand the Twelve, we are thus carried back far into the first century, into the sixties or seventies. The alternative is that the word 'Apostles' is used loosely for some eminent itinerant evangelists; but we have no sort of evidence of this use of the word in the second

or in later centuries. It is doubtful if such a use could be found as late as A.D. 100. Ignatius, Clement, and the other non-apostolic Fathers would surely have mentioned such Apostles if they had existed, especially as *Leo* regards them as forming the highest order in the ministry. Next in dignity to the rarely-seen Apostles come, according to *Leo*, the prophets, the men believed to speak under the direct inspiration of the Holy Ghost. The genuineness of a prophet's inspiration is to be tested by his morality and spirituality. The fact that the judging of character is not an easy matter, would surely have obtruded itself in all but the most primitive times.

Some of the prophets are itinerant like the Apostles; others form part of local ministries. When a church is so fortunate as to have a resident prophet, he is to be its chief priest, and to receive some of the first-fruits which would otherwise go to the poor. The 'bishop' and 'deacon' are subordinate ministers. They are elected by the congregation, while the prophets are called by God. The word 'bishops' seems clearly here to be applied to 'elders,' and this is a strong evidence of the primitive character, if not of *Leo*, at least of some of the documents on which it is based. The *monarchical* episcopacy was certainly in existence in the early years of the second century.

The Eucharist, according to *Leo*, is to be on the Lord's Day. It must be preceded by public confession and mutual forgiveness. Some optional Liturgical forms are given, which also suggest an early date—*e.g.*, the use of *Maran atha* as a pious exclamation. This password of the early Christians is compounded of two Aramaic words meaning 'Lord' and 'Come.' Whether the password signified 'Come, O Lord,' or 'the Lord hath come,' or 'the Lord cometh' we do not know. We have no evidence of this use of it after *I. Cor.* xvi. 22 (A.D. 54).

The references in *Leo* to the Second Advent are also rather primitive. The event is spoken of as *perhaps*

very near. It will be preceded by the reign of the great Deceiver. Those who hold fast to their faith under the persecutions of the Deceiver will be saved through suffering. Then the Crucified One will be seen in the sky with arms extended. The Trumpet will sound and the Lord will descend from Heaven with His Saints. This account of the matter suggests a date between A.D. 50 and A.D. 60, but not with any certainty. On the whole, it seems probable that there were two documents—one dealing with conduct, and known as *the Two Ways*—the other dealing with ecclesiastical matters, and known as the *Didache* or possibly *the Way*. These two were probably combined in the second century and, with various additions, came to be known as the *Didache*, and to be widely regarded as authoritative. The book was regarded as Scripture in Egypt, and perhaps in Syria. As time went on, the *Didache*, despite modifications, became less and less appropriate to the ever-changing church ordinances and practices, and it therefore receded in importance. Fortunately, however, some manuscripts survived, and one of these fell into the hands of Leo in the eleventh or twelfth century. He made the copy which was discovered in 1875.

It is right to add that many modern critics consider *Leo* to be based upon a fourth century document, the author of which drew largely upon his imagination in describing what he imagined to be the ecclesiastical arrangements of the first century. We know too little of the subject to be able positively to affirm or deny this theory of the matter.

I. Clement

This is the title usually given to *The Epistle from the Church at Rome to the Church at Corinth*. There is no sufficient reason to question the tradition that it was written by Clement, Bishop of Rome, in the first century. In one of the oldest manuscripts of the New Testament this Epistle appears at the end, and in a

Syrian manuscript discovered in 1876 it is inserted before the Apocalypse, and as though it were an acknowledged portion of the New Testament. According to the most probable tradition, Clement was Bishop of Rome from A.D. 93 to A.D. 101. Dionysius (*circa* A.D. 170) says that Clement's Epistle was read in the Church of Corinth every Lord's Day. Eusebius says that in his time it was read in many churches. It is probable that the letter was written in the first century, and was regarded as Scripture by many Christians.

The persecutions referred to in this Epistle seem to have been of a local rather than of a general kind. This points to a date before A.D. 115. Hegesippus tells us definitely that the letter was written under Domitian. If so, the persecutions referred to are probably those of A.D. 93, and this agrees with the tradition as to the date of Clement's episcopate. It must, however, be admitted that some sentences in *I. Clement* seem to point to a far earlier date. Peter and Paul are referred to as 'of our generation,' and some passages seem to imply that the services of the Temple were still going on. This could only have been the case before the capture of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

There is nothing else in the Epistle to imply that the author had Judaic opinions. It seems barely possible that in referring to the Temple services, he is putting himself, in imagination, back into times when the Temple still existed, and therefore using the historic present tense. This is a far-fetched interpretation of such a passage as 'Not everywhere are the daily sacrifices offered, or the free-will offerings or the sin offerings and the trespass offerings—but in Jerusalem alone.' On the face of it, we should say that this must have been written by a Jewish Christian, and before A.D. 70. If we understand some such words as 'according to the Scripture,' the question whether Jerusalem had fallen would become immaterial. The general tone of the letter certainly seems more appropriate to A.D. 93 than to A.D. 69. The author is evidently familiar with

the Pauline Epistles and the Synoptic Gospels. His quotations from these works are often inaccurate, but not more so than his quotations from the Septuagint. In both cases he seems to trust to his memory, but this was natural, owing to the great difficulty of verifying quotations from rolls of papyrus which were often inaccessible, and always difficult to use for purposes of reference. His acquaintance with *John* is perhaps more doubtful, but if we accept what seem to be references to this work, we must of course reject any such date as A.D. 69. The words 'bishops' and 'presbyters' seem to be used in the same sense, and by 'Scriptures' the writer means the Old Testament. But neither of these two facts absolutely excludes a date as late as A.D. 93. The identification of this author with the Clement mentioned in *Philippians* iv. 3 is merely a tradition. We cannot trace it beyond the third century, and the name Clement was very common. It is improbable but not impossible that an official at Philippi in the sixties should have been Bishop of Rome in the nineties.

The chief object of the Epistle is to uphold discipline and to restore harmony in the Corinthian Church. It appears that in that community some persons, puffed up with pride in their own spiritual gifts, had secured the deposition of some of their own presbyters. Clement, or the Roman Church in whose name he wrote, looked into the matter, and decided that the presbyters had been deposed on insufficient grounds. He writes in an authoritative tone which may suggest a claim of the Roman Church to some supremacy over the Corinthian; but in the main he is pleading, on Christian principles, for unity and order.

The letter is written in Greek, and does not appear to have been well known among the Latin-speaking churches. This may partly account for its ultimate rejection from the New Testament; but the rejection was probably due to the fact that it was so largely concerned with local disputes. A Paul or a John might, by sheer religious genius, have raised such a controversy to a

higher plane, and dealt with it in a manner that would be permanently inspiring. But Clement was no genius. His Epistle is moral, orthodox, and sensible. There were no such eccentric doctrines as those which led to the exclusion of *Barnabas;* but it was no doubt felt to be of insufficient value for inclusion in the Scripture. The other works attributed to Clement are probably spurious. The so-called Second Epistle is a sort of sermon, interesting as the earliest specimen that has come down to us, of a discourse delivered in a church service. It was probably preached at Corinth, preserved among the Corinthian archives, and attached by mistake to the Clementine Epistle. It was apparently composed in the second century.

The Shepherd of Hermas

This curious book was for several centuries regarded by many Christians as inspired Scripture. It takes its name from the fact that an angel dressed as a shepherd appeared in a vision to the author, and gave him various revelations. To a modern reader both the visions and the accompanying instructions are dull and unprofitable, but the pious and learned Clement of Alexandria tells us that the book was divinely spoken, and by revelation. His contemporary, Tertullian, also spoke highly of the work, but after he had become a Montanist he decided that it was pernicious. The *Shepherd of Hermas* is quoted as Scripture by Irenæus, and as divinely inspired by Origen, though the latter mentions that it is despised by some. Eusebius is very doubtful about its authority, while Athanasius regards the book as profitable but not canonical.

The author of the *Shepherd of Hermas* tells us that he was sold as a slave to a Roman lady, and fell in love with her sister. He dreamed that he was struggling through water and over rough ground. To him there appeared a vision in the sky, of the lady he loved. She told him that God was angry with him because of his

impure thoughts. Then he had a vision of an aged woman with a book. She tells him that God is displeased with him because he spoils his children by over-indulgence. Many details of these visions seem as inconsequential and meaningless as those in ordinary dreams. The aged lady with the book continually reappears, growing continually younger. She symbolizes the Church. Her rejuvenescence is attributed to the beneficial effects of the dreams of Hermas. Presently there comes the vision of the shepherd-angel, from whom the book takes its name. He gives a series of commandments which are by no means of 'the stuff that dreams are made on.' They are no doubt the invention of the author, but they may have been more or less suggested by visions. The author is a husband and a father, who naturally holds that wives should be meek and children obedient. Other husbands and fathers naturally welcomed angelic revelations which coincided with their own convictions. Wives were not indisposed to accept messages which they could apply to others rather than to themselves. Other facts help to explain the undoubted popularity of this rather dull book. Early Christians were warned against the reading of Pagan literature. They were the more inclined to welcome a Christian allegory which made appeal to the fancy and the imagination. Moreover, the book has flashes of real insight. Thus 'the Church' warns Hermas against dwelling too much upon his own sinfulness. He must pray for positive virtue as well as for forgiveness of shortcomings. The author has a healthy contempt for mere professions of repentance, and a healthy belief in the possibility of living for the glory of God, and not resting satisfied with a minimum of attainment. But he fell into the common mistake of dreamers—the belief that he could foretell the future. At first this would add to the prophet's vogue; but when his predictions were not fulfilled, his book naturally fell into disrepute. In the Muratorian fragment (*circa* A.D. 170), Hermas is stated

to be the brother of Pius, who was Bishop of Rome in the middle of the second century. If this be accepted, it is curious that the book contains no allusion to the episcopal character of the Church, or to any of the Gnostic heresies which were so prevalent at that time. Such omissions suggest an earlier date, especially as bishops and presbyters are spoken of as though the two were identical or almost identical. A reference to Clement as the authorized writer of letters from the Roman to other churches, and the fact that none of the other New Testament books are quoted, suggest a first century date. We must, however, notice that there is a similar absence of direct quotations from the Old Testament. This may be taken as evidence that the author had never been a Jew, and that he did not belong to the Apostolic generation. In fact, he expressly asserts that the Apostles are dead. On the whole, a date about A.D. 97 seems best to meet the case, especially as the Church was then enjoying a respite from persecution through the clemency of Nerva. Hermas speaks of persecution as over, and predicts a recurrence of it in a way that implies a period of comparative peace.

NOTE ON CHAPTER XXI

I have not included among disputed books any of the Apocryphal Gospels, as we have no evidence that these were anywhere accepted as 'Scripture.' They were generally based on one of the Canonical Gospels, with additions made in the interests of some heretical doctrine, and of stories concerning the Childhood of Jesus, and of the life of His Mother, apparently invented for the benefit of lovers of miracles. In many cases these Gospels claim to be the work of Apostles, but modern critics regard them as forgeries of the second century or later.

The *Gospel according to the Hebrews,* of which we have only fragments, was probably written in the first century. Its possible relation to the Matthew Gospel and the Matthew

Logia has been referred to in Chapter XVII. Burrage identifies this Gospel with Q.

The *Gospel according to the Egyptians* belongs probably to the second century. A fragment of this work is quoted in the so-called *II. Clement,* and a few other fragments have come down to us. Harnack and others assign to this document the Sayings discovered in Egypt by Grenfell and Hunt. It is pantheistic and ascetic in character.

Fragments of the *Gospel according to Peter* have also been discovered in Egypt.

The *Protevangel of James* seems to be a third century Gnostic recension of Jewish Christian work, probably written at the very beginning of the second century. Its narrative begins with the conception of Mary, and ends with the death of Zacharias.

Apart from what is borrowed from the New Testament, there is little of value in the Apocryphal Gospels, but a few Sayings attributed to Jesus are suggestive and interesting.

See Kirsopp Lake's *The Apostolic Fathers* (1921); C. Taylor's *The Shepherd of Hermas* (1903); C. Michel's *Protévangile de Jacques* (1911).

CHAPTER XXII

THE CANON AND THE TEXT

I.—The Canon

The Canon of the New Testament is simply the authorized list of twenty-seven books which make up what we call the New Testament. We have seen that all these books were probably written before the year A.D. 100; but certainly at that date not one of the twenty-seven was regarded as Scripture. This title was still reserved for the Old Testament. The New Testament books were in no way grouped together, and it is unlikely that any single Christian had read them all. Each book was originally the cherished possession of a church or individual. In the case of a circular letter, copies would naturally be kept by each of the churches addressed. In many cases a venerated manuscript would be taken out at intervals and read aloud, wholly or in part, to the local church, generally at gatherings for public worship. Perhaps a portion would be substituted for one of the two Lessons, ordinarily taken from the Law and the Prophets. Thus the idea that these documents were in some sense Scripture would gradually arise.

The books would soon begin to circulate from church to church, sometimes by a loan, sometimes by the permission to have a copy made. A Christian changing his domicile would perhaps take with him a copy of some precious document owned by his church, and would introduce it to the community which he joined in his new home. Its acceptance there would naturally depend partly on the extent to which it appealed to the congregation, and especially to the elders. If it con-

tained any Sayings of Jesus, these would at once be accepted as authoritative, unless the Sayings were regarded as Apocryphal. Similarly, if the manuscript was believed to be the work of an Apostle or other direct disciple of Jesus, it would be eagerly welcomed, and read aloud in the services of the church, in addition to, or alternately with, the usual lessons from the Law and the Prophets. The rapidity with which a particular book was circulated and recognized as inspired would depend on a variety of circumstances. A document might be of the highest value, and yet remain hidden in the archives of a particular church, and so be unknown even to learned Christian scholars. Thus the *Epistle of James*, because it was especially addressed to Jewish Christians of the Dispersion, remained little known to Gentile Christians, and does not appear in the early lists. The late acceptance of the *Second Epistle of Peter* may perhaps be similarly accounted for. On the other hand, it must be remembered that a book might be widely circulated and quoted in, say, the second century, and yet it might so happen that no quotation from it or mention of it has survived in the scanty fragments of early Christian literature that have come down to us. When we add that the exact date of such literature is generally uncertain, and that books attributed to a particular author are often of doubtful genuineness, we must expect much uncertainty about the steps by which each of the twenty-seven books came to be accepted. Arguments derived from the silence of writers in any particular age must not be pressed too far, especially as such silence can only be predicated of such portions of their writing as have come down to us. Bearing in mind these cautions and qualifications, it will be useful to summarize the evidence, such as it is, from the four successive generations of the second century.

A.D. 100 TO A.D. 125

The first use of the word 'gospel' for a *written document* belongs to this period. It occurs in Ignatius (*circa* A.D. 105) and also in the *Didache*. The use of the singular suggests the probability that *one* Gospel only is referred to. If so it was probably *Matthew*, as this book enjoyed for many years a marked pre-eminence among the Gospels. *Mark* and *Luke* are nevertheless quoted as authoritative in the first quarter of the century. To these three Gospels we may add *Acts*, *Romans*, *I. Corinthians*, *Titus*, and *Hebrews*. Not quite so well attested is the acceptance of *Ephesians*, *Colossians*, and *James*. With still more hesitation we may include among books quoted as authoritative before A.D. 125, *Galatians*, *Philippians*, *I.* and *II. Timothy*, and, at the very end of this period, *II. Corinthians*, *II. Thessalonians*, *I. Peter*, and *I. John*. There may be references to the Fourth Gospel and to *I. Thessalonians*, but these are very questionable. We have certainly no proof that, by A.D. 125, *Philemon*, *II. Peter*, *II.* and *III. John*, and *Jude* were anywhere accepted as authoritative.

A.D. 125 TO A.D. 150

In Justin Martyr (*circa* A.D. 140), we find much Johannine theology, especially in connection with the doctrine of the Logos and the Pre-existence of Jesus. Though Justin does not mention *John*, we can hardly doubt his familiarity with that Gospel. It must not, however, be supposed that any of the above-mentioned witnesses assign to any of the books, that unique position which they afterwards attained. There is no hint of any claim of infallibility for any of them. The Sayings of Jesus were evidently regarded as of supreme authority; and if a book was believed to be the work of one of His immediate disciples, it would be diligently and reverently quoted, and only very rarely criticized. But Papias declares

his preference for oral tradition over written documents. The first list of authoritative Christian books of which we have any real knowledge was made about the year A.D. 140 by the heretic Marcion. Marcion's list is in itself of small value, as it was evidently drawn up on the principle of including such books only as agreed with the views of its author. None of the Four Gospels pleased this heretic, as he was bitterly opposed to anything that he regarded as Judaic. He therefore promulgated an abridged version of *Luke*, the least Jewish of the Synoptists, as the only Gospel. Paul was Marcion's favourite writer, and among the Pauline writings he was naturally most attracted by that one which was specially directed against Judaism. He therefore put *Galatians* first among Paul's Epistles. The fact that of the Pauline Epistles only the 'Pastorals' were excluded by Marcion may indicate that the latter were not regarded as Paul's; or the omission may be due some doctrinal bias. A list made on such principles has, of course, no critical value. Its interest lies in the fact that it is, so far as we know, the first formal attempt to distinguish between authoritative documents and others. As books multiplied, sometimes appearing under the name of an Apostle or professing to be authentic Gospels, it was inevitable that further attempts at discrimination should be made.

A.D. 150 TO A.D. 175

Justin Martyr mentions that, in his time, some of the Christian books were read at the weekly services for public worship. This would put them on a sort of equality with the Scriptures of the Old Testament. Justin does not name the books which were so read, but we may assume that they were almost identical with those which, within a few years of his death, were undoubtedly regarded as Scripture. This brings us to the Muratorian Fragment which may be dated about A.D. 170. It is unfortunately only a fragment. At the beginning of

what we have of this document, the author seems to be referring to *Mark*. He then speaks of *Luke* as the third, and of *John* as the fourth Gospel. That he had spoken of *Matthew* as the first may be taken for granted. The author regards the four Gospels as inspired and in close agreement, 'since in all of them all things are declared by the one and supreme spirit.' Thirteen Epistles are then attributed to Paul, and of these the names are given. They exactly correspond with the thirteen which we attribute to the Apostle to the Gentiles, but they are given in a different order from that of our New Testament. The author rejects as spurious Epistles to the Laodiceans and to the Alexandrians, which had been assigned by some people to Paul. He admits *Jude*, as well as two Epistles attributed to John, and 'the book of Wisdom written by friends of Solomon,' and also the Apocalypses of John and Peter; but he acknowledges that the last of these is rejected by some. The rest of the references to specific books are lost, or too fragmentary to be of value. Thus *The Shepherd of Hermas* and some other books which we reject are mentioned, but we cannot say how far the author accepts or excludes them. Similarly the omission of *James*, *I.* and *II. Peter*, and *Hebrews* proves nothing, as these may or may not have been mentioned in those parts of the document which have perished. The *Peter Apocalypse* may be a misnomer for one or both of the Petrine Epistles. *Wisdom* is presumably the book now included in the Jewish Apocrypha. On the whole we may say that the Muratorian list corresponds closely but is not absolutely identical with our New Testament.

Tatian's *Diatessaron* may also be dated about the year A.D. 170. This is a sort of harmony of our four Gospels, an attempt to weave their contents into a single narrative. It indicates a general acceptance of the Gospels. Tatian evidently knew of no others, or if he did, he regarded them as Apocryphal.

A.D. 175 TO A.D. 200

Any doubt as to the recognition of the fourfold Gospel disappears in this period. Irenæus tells us that the Church has four Gospels, because the world has four corners. Whatever we may think of his physical geography, we must recognize in this statement a feeling that the fourfold Gospel was regarded as a fixed fact, corresponding to the supposed facts in the world of Nature. Of the Epistles, Irenæus names or quotes as authoritative all except *Philemon, James, III. John,* and *II. Peter.* His omission to mention these is, of course, no evidence that they were not generally accepted, as Irenæus gives us no list of what he regarded as Sacred Books. *Philemon* was often regarded as part of *Colossians,* and *III. John* might well be passed over on account of its brevity; but the omission of *James* and *II. Peter* from both the Muratorian Fragment and from the writings of Irenæus is important. It constitutes a real argument, though not, of course, a proof, that these were second century works. If, however, they were not accepted by A.D. 170, it seems strange that they were ever accepted at all. It must be remembered that neither Irenæus nor any of our early authorities make any reference to the New Testament as a whole. The books are still thought of as separate books, written by Apostles or by other inspired men who had known the Lord Jesus during His human ministry, and whose testimony and doctrine were generally accepted in the Christian Church.

Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth, writing about A.D. 180, speaks of the Epistles of Clement and Soter as read aloud in the churches. This suggests that they ranked as Canonical, or else that the mere reading of an Epistle in the churches did not imply that it was regarded as on the same level as Scripture. Several writers of this period plainly imply that the term 'Scripture' was still limited to the Old Testament. Theophilus of Antioch, however, applies the expression 'Divine Word' to some New Testament sayings.

We may notice here that many of the New Testament books had been translated quite early in the second century into Syriac, Latin, and other languages: and that the testimony of these versions, so far as they have come down to us, closely corresponds with the witness of the authors who wrote in Greek and used the Greek originals. Some of the Syriac versions are written in a dialect near akin to the first century vernacular of Palestine; but it is impossible to declare definitely whether they belong to the first or even to the second century. The Syriac Scriptures include most of the Muratorian list, but omit *Jude* and *Revelation*, as well as *II. Peter* and *II.* and *III. John*. They contain no book not found in our New Testament. The old Latin versions give similar testimony. They are written in an African dialect of Latin. Rome itself was practically bi-lingual in the second century. There was therefore no need of a Latin version for Romans; but the province of 'Africa' lay beyond Greek influence, and the old Latin versions were no doubt intended for the Church which had its headquarters at Carthage. At least one such version was current there before A.D. 170. It included *Jude* and *Revelation* but probably omitted *Hebrews* and some of the short personal Epistles. The testimony of the heretics must also count for something. With the exception of Marcion, the second century heretics appealed, as far as we know, to the same Scriptures as were accepted by the orthodox. This fact proves how unique a position these books held in the second century.

The closing years of that century are illuminated by the genius and learning of Tertullian and Clement of Alexandria. It would be difficult to name two Christians who by temperament were more unlike one another. Tertullian was by instinct a controversialist, a fervid African, fiercely intolerant towards all who differed from him. Clement was a reconciler, a Platonist and a mystic; one who felt that God's Word was at work in the souls of pagan philosophers. He was ever striving

to spiritualize the letter of Scripture and the forms of the Church. But in one thing at least these two learned men were agreed. They accepted the same sacred books as the authorities, by which all doctrines must be tested. On the whole we may say that by the year A.D. 200, while there was yet no formal Canon of the universal Church, or, so far as we know, of any local church, there yet was a practical unanimity. A few books, afterwards rejected, were regarded by some Christians as having a sort of Scriptural authority. The chief of these we have mentioned in the last chapter. There were also a few books afterwards included, but as yet rejected by some of the churches. Thus, even in the third century, the African Church seems to have omitted *Hebrews*, *James*, *II.* and *III. John*, and *II. Peter;* while the Alexandrian Church appears to have included all these, as well as the other books which we include, and to have added *Barnabas*, the *Shepherd of Hermas*, and the *Didache*. Of the other churches we can speak with less certainty, but we gather from Origen that the list accepted in Africa was also accepted everywhere else, with or without additions. Origen's insight, learning, and extensive travels among the churches, make him a most valuable authority for the early years of the third century.

A.D. 200 TO A.D. 400

During these two centuries, little progress was made towards an authoritative Canon. This is the more remarkable, because Christianity became the established religion of the Roman Empire quite early in the fourth century, and its leaders soon began to organize General Councils, to which representatives of all the churches were invited. The Council of Nicæa met in A.D. 325. We might have expected this assembly to compile a definite Canon. Perhaps it assumed that all Christians knew what books were and what were not included in the Scriptures. It is at any rate noteworthy that, in drawing up its famous Creed, the Council of Nicæa did not insist upon

a belief in these books. Christians were required to believe such doctrines as that Jesus descended into Hell; but they were not required to assert their belief in the Scriptures, still less in any special doctrine of inspiration or infallibility, or in any definitely named books.

Athanasius (*circa* A.D. 367) is the first writer who gives us a list in exact agreement with the twenty-seven books of our own New Testament. In addition to these he wished to include the *Didache*, and the *Shepherd of Hermas*, to be read by Catechumens, but not in the services of the Church. His list is, however, not authoritative. At most it applied to the East only, and, down to the end of the fourth century, *Hebrews*, *James*, *II.* and *III. John*, and *Jude* held a more or less subordinate position in the Western Churches. At length, in A.D. 383, a Council at Rome decided to include all the twenty-seven books, and this decision was confirmed by a Carthaginian council in A.D. 397. We may, therefore, regard the Canon as practically fixed by the end of the fourth century. The fact that St. Jerome accepted this list for his Latin version of the New Testament (*circa* A.D. 382), and that the *Vulgate* remained for nearly a thousand years the Bible of the Western Church, did much to establish the fixity of the Canon. We continue, nevertheless, to find occasional divergences down to A.D. 692.

We may next ask on what principles individual Fathers and Church Councils made the selection of books for the Canon. Did the Church select those books which she regarded as the most *valuable*, or as the most *ancient?* To some extent she was guided by both principles. At first, antiquity was the leading test. Christianity was an historical religion, claiming to be based upon certain facts, such as the Crucifixion and the Resurrection. The testimony of eye-witnesses was, from an historical point of view, of the greatest importance. Similarly, as to doctrine—Christians professed to derive their beliefs from the Teaching of Jesus. For this, those who had actually heard Him, were the best

authorities. Questions of character and trustworthiness would have to be considered. Because the Apostles were venerated, their evidence would be accepted before that of ordinary people. Again, if Mark was taught by Peter, and Luke by Paul, their testimony would be valued, quite apart from the question whether they were or were not actual hearers of the Master. There was in the Epistles much that could not be definitely deduced from the Words of Jesus, as recorded in the Gospels. Here, again, the belief in Apostolic authority was the determining factor. Passages were accepted, not because they came from personal witnesses of the earthly Ministry of Christ, but because their authors were believed to be divinely instructed. But what security was there that words attributed to an author were really his? It would be easy to multiply such questions. We can only say that the Fathers did their best, and that the conclusions at which they arrived have for the most part, though not universally, been confirmed by modern criticism. I am not, of course, alluding to the truth or falsehood of the doctrines they held, but only to the conclusions they reached as to whether the particular books they selected were really of Apostolic or sub-Apostolic authorship. In some cases the authorship of the selected books was early disputed. Origen, in the third century, decided that *Hebrews* could not have been written by Paul, and that God alone knew who the author really was. But, none the less, he accepted this Epistle as Scripture. Evidently Apostolic authorship was not considered essential.

Take, again, the question of *Barnabas*. This Epistle was, rightly or wrongly, believed to be the work of an Apostle but it was nevertheless rejected, probably because it expressed views opposed to traditional orthodoxy, perhaps also because it was felt to fall below the level of the Canonical Books in spirituality and in inspiring force. Again, Clement, like Mark, was believed to have been a personal disciple of Peter; yet *Clement* was rejected, and *Mark* retained. The *Didache* was believed to contain the teaching of the Twelve

Apostles, but was nevertheless rejected, when some of its ecclesiastical ordinances ceased to be observed. The doubts as to the authorship of these rejected books usually arose *after* their teaching had ceased to be considered orthodox.

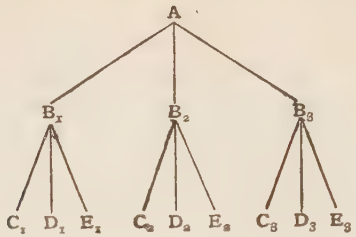
What, then, is the ultimate ground on which Christians accept these twenty-seven books as Scripture? Three answers may be given: (1) the authority of the Church: (2) the evidence that these books contain the teaching of the Apostles and their immediate disciples, (3) the internal evidence—the response of Christian hearts to the New Testament teaching. None of these answers may seem quite satisfactory, if taken separately; but, in conjunction, they have been found by almost all Christians to provide an adequate ground for their belief in the authorized Canon.

II.—The Text

The problem of the New Testament *text* is a very complicated matter, but it can be briefly summarized:

Each book was written by an author or scribe whose original manuscripts have long since perished. One, and usually more than one, copy of these originals was made; but these copies have also presumably perished. It is possible, though most improbable, that some of the manuscripts which we now possess were partly copied in the fourth or fifth century *from an original;* but the possibility is too slight to be worth considering. We cannot suppose that our oldest manuscripts are even copies of copies of the originals. Now it is hardly possible to transcribe a long manuscript exactly; and most of the mistakes made by the first copyist would be reproduced by those who made copies from his work. In some cases, however, errors would be noticed and corrected, especially if they were of a serious character. Moreover, when we possess several copies of the same manuscript, it is sometimes possible to judge of the extent to which any two of them were independent. Let

A be an original, copied by B_1, B_2, B_3, etc. Let B_1 be copied by C_1, D_1, E_1, and B_2 by C_2 D_2, E_2, as in the following diagram :



Now suppose that of these twelve copies, only C_1, D_2, E_3 remain. If the copies were good copies, we could practically recover the text of A; for all the three surviving copies are independent. They would differ, of course, but it is unlikely that precisely the same mistakes would have crept into any two of the three. The problem of the New Testament text is, however, far more complicated. We have to consider the possibility of marginal notes becoming incorporated with the text; of alterations deliberately made for doctrinal purposes; and many other contingencies. It would be impossible to guess *a priori* how far the original text could be recovered; but experience seems to have proved that: (*a*) The original is not absolutely recoverable; (*b*) the doubtful points are not of prime importance. In illustration of this fact, we will assume that the story of the Woman taken in Adultery was an addition to the original text. Most Christians would deplore the omission of this touching incident; but after all, it would not affect any vital point in Christianity. Even the truth or falsehood of the story does not depend on whether it was part of the original manuscript of the Fourth Gospel. No doubt those who believe that the Bible is infallible will be disturbed by discrepancies of manuscripts, and by the impossibility of saying precisely what the authors originally wrote. But their point of view could only be justified if some miracle or

series of miracles had preserved for us an infallible text, and had provided us with some means of recognizing it.

For ordinary students, the essential facts are, that we have:

(1) Four—possibly five—important manuscripts of the fourth or fifth century.

(2) A number of later manuscripts in Greek.

(3) A number of manuscripts in other languages, which derive from quite early translations.

The first problem of textual criticism is to compare these, and to give to each its due weight. Side by side with this task, a number of other tests have to be applied. One reading might have in its favour a balance of support from manuscripts, and yet be rejected upon internal evidence. Thus, it is a general principle to prefer obscure to obvious readings, where there is anything approaching to equality in the manuscripts which support two different readings; for copyists are more likely to substitute a commonplace for a paradox, than to reverse the process. If Jesus said 'Whosoever is angry with his brother *without a cause,* shall be in danger of the judgment,' it is most improbable that a copyist would omit the italicized words. If, however, Jesus did not speak them, a pious reader might well write them in the margin of the manuscript, and the next copyist might as easily suppose them to be part of the text. Accordingly our revisers omit the words, though they are found in many of the manuscripts. Such principles are often difficult to apply, and on many points competent critics arrive at opposite conclusions. Of course, the difficulty is intensified when some disputed moral or theological point is concerned. It would be absurd for a critic to accept a text just because it seemed to favour his own theological opinions. Yet, when there is approximate equality in manuscript authority, he can hardly fail to give a preference to the reading which agrees best with his own conception of what the writer would be likely to have written. Trinitarians may reject the famous text about the Three

Witnesses in Heaven because the testimony of the manuscripts is strongly against it; but a critic who was convinced that the doctrine of the Trinity was unknown to the Apostolic generation would naturally have an additional bias against accepting a reading in which that doctrine was definitely asserted.

In the third century there must have existed hundreds, perhaps thousands, of New Testament manuscripts; but most of these were destroyed in the Diocletian persecution, A.D. 303. The emperor had decided that Christianity must be utterly suppressed, and he was clever enough to see that the destruction of documents might be more efficacious than the destruction of human beings.

We possess more than three thousand New Testament manuscripts in Greek, besides a vast number in other languages. These manuscripts may be divided into three groups, with common characteristics. The first group contains the two fourth century manuscripts, together with two early translations. The second group contains one important sixth century manuscript, and also valuable and very early translations into Old Latin and Old Syriac. The third and largest group contains the two chief fifth century manuscripts, and the great majority of later copies, whether in Greek or in translations. This third group has the peculiarity of often combining the readings of the other two. It is possible that all of the first group come primarily from one pre-Diocletian manuscript; the second group from a second; and the third group from combinations of manuscripts belonging to the other two. The numerous variations within each group would be the result of errors, omissions, interpolations, and deliberate changes, made by the thousands of copyists. How many Greek manuscripts really survived the Diocletian persecution cannot be determined. After the cessation of persecution, and still more when Christianity became the religion of the empire (A.D. 324), the work of copying was vigorously resumed, and we have to-day two manuscripts, one in Rome and the other at Petro-

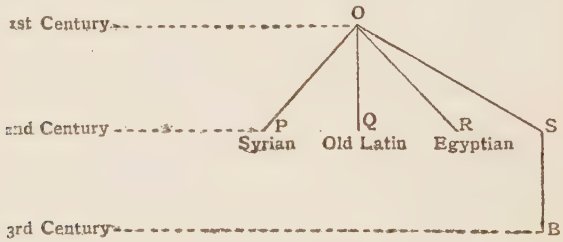
grad, which were probably written between A.D. 330 and A.D. 370. Both of these originally contained the whole, and still contain almost the whole, of the New Testament. The manuscript at Rome is known as 'B' (*codex Vaticanus*). It originally contained the Old Testament in Greek, as well as the New. Portions of both have perished; but it is on the whole the most valuable and probably the most ancient authority for the greater part of the New Testament. This copy was probably originally made in Egypt. We cannot say positively whether 'B' ever contained the Apocalypse. The manuscript at Petrograd is known as 'Aleph' (*codex Sinaiticus*). It was discovered at Mount Sinai in the middle of the nineteenth century. This manuscript contained *Barnabas*, part at least of the *Shepherd of Hermas*, and perhaps of the *Didache*, as well as the whole of the Canonical Bible. Its place of origin is uncertain. 'B' and 'Aleph' are of such supreme importance that when they concur, many scholars would accept them, as against the whole of the other manuscripts.

The two great fifth century manuscripts are known as 'A' (*codex Alexandrinus*), and 'C' (*codex Ephræmi*). The former is in the British Museum, and the text of our Authorized Version is in tolerably close agreement with it. The revisers attached more weight to 'B' and to 'Aleph.' 'A' probably originated in Constantinople. It contains two so-called Epistles of Clement. 'C' is in Paris. Many parts of this manuscript are undecipherable, and large portions have altogether disappeared.

To the sixth century we owe the famous manuscript known as 'D' (*codex Bezæ*), which is now at Cambridge. This contains a Latin as well as a Greek text. It differs strikingly in many places from the earlier manuscripts, so much so that it probably represents a different pre-Diocletian manuscript. It contains only the Gospels and *Acts*, and a few verses from general Epistles. Some of the peculiarities of 'D' seem to indicate a still earlier divergence. It was probably written at Lyons. 'W,' a manuscript of the Gospels, discovered in 1907 in Egypt,

and now in Washington, is attributed by many critics to the fourth century; by others to the fifth or sixth.

The first five of these documents, 'B,' 'Aleph,' 'A,' 'C,' and 'D,' are certainly of more importance than all the other Greek manuscripts together. They must, however, be checked by the early translations into other languages, and by quotations from the Fathers. Some translations from the Greek, known as Versions, were made centuries before the earliest surviving Greek manuscript. We do not possess the originals of these translations, but the copies based ultimately upon them indicate traditions which demand careful study. When the Greek authorities are pretty equally balanced the verdict of an early translation may be decisive. The following diagram illustrates this point.



Here O represents the original first century copy. P is a Syrian translation made early in the second century. Q is an old Latin version of about the same date. R is an Egyptian version of the late second century, and S a document from which the Vatican Codex B was ultimately derived, but only after generations of copying and re-copying. We have no means of comparing the relative values of P and S. If, however, P were decidedly superior, a Syrian translation might provide a reading more authentic than one given in B. If our object were to prove the impossibility of arriving at a perfect text of the New Testament, it would be easy to multiply such hypotheses.

Quotations from the Fathers are of little use for

textual purposes. We have a number of patristic books of the second and third centuries, in which quotations from and references to the New Testament books are to be found; but the Fathers frequently trusted to their memories. On verbal points their quotations are almost valueless, but when they relate an incident, or refer to a Saying, where the general meaning rather than the exact words is in dispute, their evidence may be of importance.

NOTE ON CHAPTER XXII

The disappearance of all early manuscripts of the New Testament is accounted for partly by the perishable nature of the papyrus on which they were written, and partly by deliberate destruction, especially, though not exclusively, in the Diocletian persecution. In the fourth century the more durable vellum began to be used, and the conversion of Constantine transformed the Government from destroyers into preservers of manuscripts. The Emperor on one occasion ordered fifty copies of very fine quality, and it is at least possible that B and Aleph are two of these. Of the thousands of copies made afterwards, nearly three thousand survive in Greek and nine thousand in other languages. These are, however, mostly of parts only of the New Testament. It may be noted that we have far fewer early manuscripts of most classical works. Of the *Annals of Tacitus,* for instance, there is only one complete copy, and we have no definite reference to this work until after A.D. 1400. This is an extreme case, but the New Testament stands at the other extreme. Slender as its textual base may seem, its position in this respect is far above that of most of the works of antiquity. Origen refers to the great variety of readings that existed, even in the third century. Fresh varieties came in with each successive generation of copyists. It would be beyond the scope of this book to attempt any account of the steps by which scholars sought to arrive at the original text.

McClymont's *New Testament Criticism* (1913) gives a good general modern survey of textual criticism. He puts B and Aleph, and perhaps the newly-discovered W, in the fourth century, A and C in the fifth, D in the fifth or sixth. The

oldest Syriac and Latin Versions he dates from the second century, and the Egyptian (Coptic) from the third.

For further information see C. R. Gregory's *Canon and Text of the New Testament* (1907); Kenyon's *Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts* (1911); and Souter's *The Text and Canon of the New Testament* (1913).

The last great original contribution to the study of the New Testament is H. von Soden's monumental work *Die Schriften des neuen Testaments* (4 vols., 1902-1913). The three thousand large and closely-printed pages leave unaffected such elementary conclusions as are contained in this chapter, but von Soden introduces a new and elaborate nomenclature, dividing the manuscripts into three classes—K, H, I—and dispensing with the familiar A, B, Aleph, etc.

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